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ABSTRACT

Based on information gathered in 1986, this report describes day care in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. The focus of the report is on structural aspects of day care, including provision, management and finances, and questions concerning supply, demand, and distribution. Part I provides an introduction to the report and discusses the Scandinavian model, central and local governments, public-private mixes, variations in definitions of the preschool years, changing family patterns, access to day care, and supply and demand. Parts II, III, and IV, which report on the individual countries, all contain sections about policy and objectives, day care for preschool children, forms of day care, subsidized family day care, access to day care, and general issues. Day care in Denmark is further discussed in terms of creches, day nurseries, age-integrated day care, recreation centers, and preschool classes. Day care in Norway is further discussed in terms of public day care in centers, officially approved day care in private centers, and unregulated private day care. Day care in Sweden is further discussed in terms of day care centers, and part-time day care. The questionnaire used to gather data is appended. (RH)

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Arnlaug Leira

DAY CARE FOR CHILDREN IN DENMARK, NORWAY AND SWEDEN

Rapport

87:5

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DAY CARE FOR CHILDREN
IN DENMARK, NORWAY AND SWEDEN.

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Preface

In the last lo - 15 years international interest in the day-care services developed for children in Scandinavia has been increasing. To some extent this may be explained by a growing international concern with child-care in general, but some of the interest is also caused be the "Scandinavian approach" to day-care provision, which in certain respects differs from that of other countries of Europe.

The present volume deals with day care in Denmark, Norway and Sweden. The focus of the report is on day-care structure:, on provision, management and finances, and on questions concerning supply, demand and distribution. Originally, the individual national reports were prepared in connection with a study called "Forms of Child Care", initiated by the Council of Europe, as the 1986/87 Social Research Fellowship Programme. The Council named a Study Group, headed by Miss Pamela P. Thayer of the United Kingdom, which was to prepare a report on the status of day-care provision and related topics in the Council member States and Finland. As a member of the Study Group I collected the information and wrote the reports on day care in Denmark, Norway and Sweden. In this collection the main parts of these original national reports are reproduced as Parts II - IV, with minor editions only.

Information was gathered during 1986. It should be noted that some of the statistical data refers to the early 1980's and the situation may have changed since. References have been made mainly to the basic legislation, to administrative directives and requests, and to the central governments' decisions concerning day care. Only a few titles from the considerable research-based literature are included. I have, however, tried to give references to bibliographies and overviews of national research produced in the three countries. The questionnaire prepared by the Study Group, which served as a general frame of reference for the Council of Europe study, is rendered verbatim in the Appendix.

In the preparation of the national reports I was much helped by Kirsten Vestbirk Laub and Ulla Broen, both of Denmark's National Board of Social Welfare; Sigbrit Wollbrand and Karen Blomqvist of Sweden's National Board of Health and Welfare; and Johanna Suhrland and Marit Benterud of the Norwegian Ministry of Government Administration and Consumer Affairs. They all contributed generously from their wide-ranging knowledge of the subject matter, and took a keen interest in the project. The responsibility for any error of fact or judgment that may still be found in the report, rests wholly with the author.

Special thanks are due also to Asbjørg Ellingsen, Lillemor Grande and Eva Lie who did the typing of the manuscript.

Oslo, May 1987

Arnlaug Leira.

PART I

DAY CARE IN THE SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES

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PART I

Day Care in the Scandinavian Countries.

Day care for pre-school children has over the last 20-30 years become increasingly important in national politics in Scandinavia[*]. In the early Post World War II-period a traditional gendered division of labour ascribing the breadwinning to the men and domestic management, housework and child-care to the women, was common in all the Scandinavian countries. Most of the children under school-age were cared for at home, by their mothers, by older siblings or by household members or servants. In the following decades a system of nationwide public day-care services was established in all the countries. Although originating much earlier, it was not until after 1945 that collective day care, supported by public means, was developed for "mass consumption" in Scandinavia. In this process childhood was increasingly separated from life at home, and professional care offered within the framework of specialized institutions gradually supplemented the motherly or familybased care. Such trends in the development of day-care facilities may be witnessed in all the three countries, even if the spread of public day care differs.

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[*] "Day-care" in this report is used to designate forms of extra familial child-care, intended to supplement the upbringing in the home during parts of the day. Forms of child-care established for children for whom local authorities have taken over parental responsibilities, such as orphanages or foster homes are not included in this report (see Grinde (1985) for an assessment of the different national practices in this field).

The present study deals with a limited, yet vital field of social reproduction, the provision of ordinary day care in 3 of the Nordic countries, Denmark, Norway and Sweden. In this collection of national reports no effort has been made to present the didactic traditions represented in the day-care services nor to assess the benefits of the different schools of pedagogical thought merged within the national day-care organization of the three countries. The focus of interest is on day-care structure and on questions such as: how is day care provided, financed and managed, and by whom? How is the responsibility for provision distributed between the family, public authorities and private bodies? What is the regional and social distribution of day-care services, and what is the the relation of supply to demand?

"The Scandinavian model"

Scandinavians and non-Scandinavians alike tend to assume that there exists a Scandinavian "model" of the welfare state, and accordingly, that welfare policies in the three countries are largely developed according to a common Nordic pattern. In recent research, however, it is often noted that this idea needs reassessment. The countries have often pursued different strategies for example with respect to policies concerning motherhood and early childhood (Siim 1983, Borchorst and Siim 1986, Leira 1985). When the day-care systems are examined in some detail there appears a mixture of similarities and dissimilarities in the national approaches to day-care provision. In part this may reflect the differences in the relationship of central to local government, as well as differences in the role assigned to public authorities and private bodies respectively in the provivision of day care in the three countries.

A basic convergence in the "day-care philosophies" of Denmark, Norway and Sweden is easily observed, for example as regards the way in which day-care services are conceived and integrated in national welfare policies. In all the three countries provision of high-quality day care is commonly accepted as a national concern, and as part of the welfare state service system. Providing day care for pre-school children has come to be regarded as a responsibility to be shared, primarily between parents and public authorities. In Denmark, Norway and Sweden alike the national policies aim at making day care universally available, accommodating all children whose parents wish to make use of such facilities. The degree to which this part of day-care policy has succeeded differs between the countries (cp. below). Yet the experience of high-quality day care has come to be commonly perceived as socially and educationally advantageous for young children.

An expression of a common "philosophy" underlying public day-care provision may also be seen in the conceptualization of "day-care content", in that all the three countries have favoured the development, by professionals, of a public day-care system in which both caring and educational aspects are integrated and attributed equal importance. By this conceptualization present-day day care has incorporated and merged the best of the caring traditions stemming from the early children's asylums with the educational and developmental theories embodied in the tradition of the Froebel kindergartens. In Scandinavia where extra-familial day care has been in a process of rapid professionalization, this dual concern with education and care is also integrated in the professional training of pre-school teachers.

Central and local government

In the structure of the different national day-care organizations some common features are prominent, too. Central government defines the national aims for day-care provision. Provision is regulated by law, and questions concerning day care come under the province of one of the Ministries within the government administration, the Ministry of Social Affairs in Denmark and Sweden, the Ministry of Government Administration and Consumer Affairs in Norway.

The concern with local autonomy and the importance attributed to decentralized decision-making is another common characteristic of the day-care systems in Scandinavia. The relationship of central to local government is somewhat differently structured in the three countries. In the last years the tendency, most strongly pronounced in Denmark, has been towards a decentralization of decision-making in most questions related to forms and contents of day care, and also the level of supply to demand. The local authorities of which there are more than 250 in both Denmark and Sweden and more than 450 in Norway, are charged with the responsibility for planning, provision, and distribution of day care. The decentralized approach has been successful in stimulating a wide variety of day-care services. Not surprisingly,the local autonomy has also resulted in problems with fullfilling national aims for day-care provision. Introducing legislation to make day-care provision mandatory for the local authorities has lately been discussed in Sweden and Norway.

Public-private mixes

Even if day care is regarded as a public responsibility and public intervention and investment in this field is anticipated and accepted, the day care system is not "all public" in any of the countries. Denmark and Norway have welcomed initiatives of voluntary organizations and other private bodies in day-care provision, whereas private initiatives have up to now played a comparatively much lesser role in Sweden. Leaving day care to parents alone or to a "free market" has not been the national policy in any of the countries. So far, large-scale profit-making schemes have not been accepted into the general day-care programmes.

One aspect of the variation in national public-private mixes in day care is evident in the provision and management of day care centres. In Sweden 98% of such centres are provided by the local authorities (municipalities), 2% only by private bodies. In Norway and Denmark approximately 40% of the day-care centres are established by private bodies.

The private initiatives in day care are not, however, "all private". All day-care facilities whether public or private, have to be approved by public authorities (provided that a certain number of children are accommodated). In Norway the authority of approval rests with the central government's representative at county level, in Denmark and Sweden with the local (municipal) authority. In Norway and Sweden the approved day-care services, whether private or public, are entitled to specific state subsidies. This was earlier the case in Denmark, too. From 1. January 1987 the local authorities in Denmark will receive government grants as block grants, instead of as specific grants ear-marked for particular areas like day care. Norway will maintain the specific grants for day care a few years hence. Thereafter day-care grants will be incorporated in the block grant.

The distributive patterns of day-care costs are relatively similar in Denmark and Norway. The Swedish pattern is different in that state subsidies represent a comparatively larger proportion of day-care costs and parental fees (consumer contribution) a smaller one than what is the case in the other countries.

The day-care running costs are divided between the state, the municipalities and the consumers as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The division of day-care running costs in Denmark, Norway and Sweden. 1984. Per cent.

Contributors:	Denmark	Norway	Sweden
State	35.5	33.4	43.8
Municipalities	42.5	42.2	44.0
Consumers	22.0	20.9	10.1
Others	0.0	3.5	2.1
	100	100	100

Source: Social tryghed i de nordiske lande, København 1986, excerpt from Table 5.2.4.1, p.95.

In 1984 the state covered 35,5% of the running costs in Denmark, 33,4% in Norway and 43,8% in Sweden. On average the Danish parental fees covered 22%, the Norwegian parental fees 20,9% and the Swedish 10,1%. The municipal contribution was approximately 42% in Denmark and Norway, 44% in Sweden.

The pre-school years in

No common definition is etablished in the countries of Europe as to which age group constitutes the "pre-school years". The age for formal school entrance differs considerably between the countries. In the Nordic countries for example, statutory school age is 7, in Luxembourg and the United Kingdom it is 5 years.

An overview of the ages for formal school entrance in some European countries is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Age for starting formal school

Age	Country
7	Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden,
6	Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain,
5	Luxembourg, United Kingdom

The years for which day care is provided comprises a wider age range in Scandinavia than what is generally found in Western Europe. A flexible school start is sometimes allowed, which means a more differentiated school start than what is implied by the statutory school age. Some form of pre-school education is commonly offered to the oldest pre-school children, the 5-6 year olds. The age group for which extra-familial day care is wanted may be concentrated by developments within the school system in the one end, for example by a lowering of the age for starting formal school, and in the other by expansion of the entitlements to parental leave in connection with the birth of/adoption of a child. These entitlements are particularly important in the Scandinavian countries since the proportion of parents, and particularly of mothers, in employment is very high. (cp. following section).

Maternity rights and entitlements to parental leave are somewhat differently structured in the countries. In the early 1980's the general regulations that apply to mothers in employment are as follows: In Sweden employed women are entitled to leave of absence for 26 weeks after the birth of a child, plus 26 weeks more to be used during the child's first

8 years. Economic compensation corresponding to 90% of the wage is given for 39 weeks, at reduced level for 13 weeks (1984). In Denmark employed mothers are entitled to leave of absence for 24 weeks in connection with the birth of a child (1985). Economic compensation corresponds to 90% of the wage (within a certain maximum level). In Norway the leave of absence granted with 100% wage compensation covers 20 weeks (1987). (St.meld.50, 1984-85, Om familiepolitikken p.57). In all the countries the entitlements to leave of absence may be split between the parents. (For an overview of parental leave in the Nordic countries, see Brandth and Kaul forthc.).

Changing family patterns

In the last decades the demand for extra-familial day care has been increasing throughout Scandinavia, as has also been the case in most other countries of Western Europe. This demand for day care has largely been ascribed to the changes in family patterns, such as an increase in single-parent families, an increase in families where the children have only one or no siblings, and the decline of the conventional nuclear family.

In particular, the family pattern represented by the dual-earner family, which emerged in Denmark and Sweden from the 1950´s and 1960´s on, and in Norway somewhat later, necessitated new approaches to child-care. A connection is generally assumed to exist between these two processes: the mass entry of mothers into the labour market, and the public intervention in day-care provision. The degree to which labour market policies and day-care policies were synchronized varies, however, between the countries. In Denmark and Sweden the combination of motherhood and employment was facilitated by large-scale public investments in child-care (Borchorst and Siim 1984, Näsman 1983). In Norway the public provision of day care came too late to be of special importance in furthering the employment of mothers (Leira 1985), but certainly the increase in the proportion of wage-working mothers has contributed to the increase in the demand for public day-care services.

By the early 1980's the majority of Scandinavian mothers were in employment. This applies also to the mothers of pre-school children, even to the mothers of the under 3's. In Denmark (1980) and Sweden (1985) the participation rates of mothers having children aged 0-6 years had passed 80%, in Norway it was close to 60% (1985). Even if a substantial proportion of these mothers of young children work less than full-time (which is the case in all the three countries) the labour market participation especially of the Danish and Swedish mothers is much higher than what is commonly found in the countries of Western Europe. Most strikingly this is born out among mothers of very young children. More than 80% of the Danish mothers of under 3's were in employment in 1980, and in both Sweden and Norway more than 50% of the mothers of such young children were employed in 1985.

The very high participation rates are important in the shaping of national demand for extra-familial day care, but are not the only factors of influence. (Norwegian studies moreover find that an amazing proportion of dual-earner families do not report the use of any extra-familial day care. Some mothers, but rarely fathers, state that they mind their children while doing their jobs. Some parents have arranged for "parent shifts". Some use unregulated forms of child care). High-quality day care is regarded as improving the children's environment, and expanding their possibilities for development. Formally approved day care offers safe play areas which are short in supply in many districts. Access to day care is also conceived as a support for families and children with special problems, and generally as a supplement to upbringing in the family. The more parents from different social backgrounds come to perceive professional day-care services as constituting a norm for "good" upbringing, the more the demand for such day care will come from different types of families.

Access to day care

One of the most striking differences in day-care provision in Denmark, Norway and Sweden is evidenced in the proportion of pre-school children admitted to day care. Of the Danish children aged 0-6 years approximately 53% were accomodated in approved day care in 1985 (not included in this figure is the pre-school attendance, which was 90% among 6-years-olds). Among children of pre-school age in Sweden close to 60% were accepted into approved day care in 1984. In Norway 28% of the children aged 0 - 6 years attended approved day care in 1986. Table 3 gives an overview of the proportion of pre-school children in approved day care by age in the Scandinavian countries in 1981 and 1984.

Table 3. Pre-school children attending day care by age group 1981 and 1984. Percent.

	Denmark		Sweden		Norway	
Age group	1981	1984	1981	1984	1981	1984
0 - 2	37	42	24	30	6	7
3 - 4	59	64	42	54	27	32
5 - 6	47	51	71	73	43	49

Source: Social tryghed i de nordiske lande 1984, p. 94, excerpt from Table 5.2.4.1.

In all the three countries the proportion of children admitted to the public day-care systems has been on the increase, due mainly to an expansion of places, and to some extent to a decline in the number of children in the age group. The differences between Sweden and Denmark on the one hand and Norway on the other is often attributed to Norway's later industrialization and urbanization, and also to the fact that Norwegian mothers, when seen in a Scandinavian context, are latecomers to the labour market.

In all the Scandinavian countries day-care places are available for a larger proportion of the older pre-school children than for the younger ones. This may partly be due to the costs per place, which are higher for younger than for older children. To some extent the supply level may also be related to differences in demand for the different age groups. Professional day care seems to have been more easily accepted for older than for younger children. Entitlements to parental leave during the childs's first year of life reduces demand for this age group. Particularly noteworthy is the proportion of under 3s admitted to day care in Denmark and Sweden. For this age group the two countries have a better supply of approved day-care than have most countries in Western Europe. Even so, it is interesting to observe that the child-care needs of the families of under 3's most often are not met by the formally approved day-care systems. In 1984 58% of the Danish children under 3, 70% of the Swedish children and 93% of the Norwegian children this age were not admitted to public day care.

Considerable regional differences (at county and municipal level) are reported in all the three countries when it comes to proportion of children accommodated and what forms of day care are offered.

Surveys done several years ago in Denmark, more recently in Norway and Sweden report inequalities in access to day care, referring to the distribution of available places between children of different socio-economic background. The distribution appears to favour children from resourceful families more than those coming from families with comparatively less resources. Such differences in "consumption patterns" are partly related to the regional differences in level of supply. Hours of opening and cost of place may also prevent some families from using the services offered locally. Furthermore differences in use of the public day-care services may stem from socio-cultural differences in attitudes to the forms of day care available.

The local assignment systems and criteria for priority may also contribute to a socially "skewed" distribution. In regions where demand exceeds supply children who may all belong to highly prioritized categories will compete for the places available. What is locally considered as the "best" or most justified distribution does not necessarily produce a similar result nationally, when the results of all local decisions are summed up. The importance attributed to local autonomy in decisions concerning day care contributes to the national consumption patterns that raise quiestions about distributive justice.

To a large extent the problems with "distributive justice" in day care stems from a general shortage of places, particularly in Sweden and Norway, and from establishing local autonomy as a dominant principle of day-care provision and distribution. It is generally acknowledged that an expansion of services is necessary, particularly in Sweden and Norway, in order to ensure more equitable access.

Supply and demand

In all the countries the supply of day care is short in some regions. The problem of demand exceeding supply is, however, much more pronounced in Sweden and Norway than in Denmark.

The data presented on the employment of mothers of under 3's and the information about the supply of day care indicate that ensuring high-quality day care for this group represents a challlenge in all the three countries.

Children of single working parents and children from dual-earner families are not the only categories constituting the demand for day care. However, as the labour market participation of mothers is high, and increasing, with no signs of the fathers returning to the hearth as home-makers, the children of employed parents represent the majority of the pre-school children for whom day care is demanded.

Surveys made among families with young children in Norway and Sweden indicate that unregulated forms of day care are used to supplement the approved services. (In Denmark such surveys have not been done recently). These forms of day care may include the services of relatives, neighbours, friends and of unregistered child-minders. Unregulated day care may be paid or unpaid, it may include forms preferred by parents and forms that represent a no-choice solution. This dual day-care system comprising one state subsidized, formally approved and regulated part, and one informally organized, unregulated part is probably found throughout Scandinavia, being more important numerically in Norway than in the neighbouring countries. In annual surveys of supply and demand in Sweden the development of the two segments of the day-care structure may be followed regularly. Norwegian surveys give occasional information on the subject. To what extent the use of services from either of the segments correspond to parents' preferences is not well documented (cp Pichault 1983 for data from the EC-countries).

The relationship of demand to supply is of course not only a question of number of places to be distributed among a certain number of children, and not only a question of prices and hours of attendance, even if such issues have to be considered continually, in order not to exclude certain children from day care. Access to day care also has social-cultural aspects that must be incorporated into day-care planning and provision if day care is to be a service for all children.

There is in all the countries an interest in developing diversified and flexible forms of day care that can meet the demands of children and families with different socio-economic, socio-cultural, and ethnic backgrounds. The national aims for the day-care policies of the recent future are dual: to provide for an expansion of services, and to develop forms and contents of day care to meet the demands of different children and families in a changing society with changing family patterns.

During the last decades high-quality, professional day-care facilities have been developed in Scandinavia, supported by public means. The central and local government intervention in early childhood socialization was grounded ideologically in a common philosophy, rooted in the strong egalitarian traditions of the Nordic welfare states. In principle high-standard day care developed under public auspieces and supported by public means is conceived as something all children should be entitled to. As will be seen in the national reports, the choice of means have so far not resulted in fulfilling of the universal ambitions, but this aim is still upheld in all the countries.

When compared to the day-care services of other countries in Europe, for example those of the United Kingdom, of France, Belgium or Italy, the common features characterizing day-care structure in the Scandinavian countries are prominent. However, when we shift our perspective to make an examination "from within" there are also some dissimilarities in the

Scandinavian welfare state approach to motherhood, early childhood care and pre-school education that may deserve consideration: When the national data sets concerning mothers in employment, maternity rights, parental leave and the services approved and/or provided by public day-care systems are assessed in context the emerging outlines of the national "politics of reproduction" appear as being grounded in different images of the parent-child relationship and also of the relationship of mothers to the welfare state. Borchorst and Siim (1986) have argued that an alliance was formed, a partnership was established between the Danish welfare state and the Danish mothers, in which the state acknowledged the dual role of women in production and social reproduction. Analyzing the Norwegian data I have argued that the dominant family model underlying day-care policies was that of the conventional nuclear family and that the presumption of the mother/housewife was upheld, even after a considerable proportion of mothers had joined the labour market (Leira 1986). If both assertions are valid, as I believe they are, the assumption of one common "Scandinavian model" in day-care provision appear as less obvious. Rather, one may well argue that each of the countries is developing its own "model" for early childhood care and preschool education, within a framework influenced by long-lasting mutual exchanges.

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PART II

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1. Policy and Objectives

1.1 Day-care policy and purpose

In Denmark the provision of day care is part of the general social welfare policy. Since 1976 the provision of day care for pre-school children is regulated by Lov nr. 333 af 19.juni 1974 om social bistand, (Act relating to Social Assistance), which states that the authorities are required to grant assistance "... to any person staying in this country who for himself or members of his family is in need of advice, financial or practical assistance, support for development or restoration of earning capacity, or for care, special treatment or educational support." (11). Decisions concerning day care for pre-school children are given in §§ 63-64 and §§ 69-73, (see 1.3 below).

During recent decades day-care facilities have been much in demand in Denmark. This is considered to be partly due to the high level of economic activity among mothers, and the necessity for two incomes in young families. Public provision and/or support of day care is conceived of as serving several purposes; for example as contributing to the family economy, and as facilitating the labour market participation of mothers, but also as an educational and social service to children and their families. High-quality day care is commonly regarded as being educationally and socially advantageous for children and experience of collective day care seems to be widely accepted as a norm for pre-school socialization in Denmark. For children with special needs access to extra-familial day care may also function as a preventive measure, or as "positive discrimination".

The main purpose of day-care institutions as formulated by the Ministry of Social Affairs in 1976 is to have a social and educational character, serving as a supplement to the upbringing in the home (5). National day-care policies of the 1980s aim to provide day care for all children whose parents wish to avail themselves of this facility. In practice, access to day-care is not yet established in Denmark as a universal right, as something all children are entitled to.
In the light of the national economic situation it has been pointed out, the available resources are limited. The present government has several times expressed deep concern about the use of resources by the social services, including provision of day care and has called for a reorganization of the services.

The Ministry of Social Affairs in November 1982 pointed out to the local authorities the very considerable size of the item -"provision of day care" in local budgets, and expressed a wish for the development of alternative and less costly forms of day care than the traditional ones, which would enable the local authorities to provide day care for a larger number of children (7).

The Ministry called for a reduction in the expenditure and requested a temporary ban on the building of new day-care institutions in their traditional form. It was also requested that the number of personel employed in such institutions should not exceed a certain level. The local authorities were requested to consider the possibility of increasing the number of children admitted to existing institutions (8).
On the basis of the Ministry's recommendations the National Board of Social Welfare in 1982 published guidelines for long-term local planning (17) which were strongly criticized by day-care interest groups (28).

In 1983, in guidelines to the local authorities, the Ministry strongly recommended that the building ban on traditional day-care institutions be prolonged, and that establishment of new places in day-care institutions should be avoided. The Ministry recommended that children in need of day care be placed in facilities demanding fewer resources than traditional day care (9).

The Ministry's recommendations have had different impacts on the different districts. In some places the number of children admitted to existing institutions was increased, and the staff/child ratio was altered. In other districts the effect was negligible. In an overall evaluation of the national trends during 1982-85 it was pointed out that the number of personnel has decreased in relation to the number of institutions and to the number of children (24).

In order to facilitate the development of untraditional forms of day care the Ministry may grant exemptions from established norms. Experiments with alternative use of resources in day care are given economic support by the National Board of Social Welfare. A series of projects has been tried out, some of which may eventually be models for further development. (A discussion of research and development, and an overview of recent projects are presented in (23).

The Ministry of Social Affairs has recently published a pamphlet "Børn og Pasning '86" (Children and Child Care) (12), with an invitation to open discussion about the structure and composition of day-care services. The booklet discusses conventional forms of day care and presents ongoing experiments with new forms. Two themes are emphasized, the need for a flexible use of resources, and the importance of close cooperation between day-care services and the parents.

The present government's policy aims at a restructuring of day-care services, calling on alternative use of resources through the development of unconventional, less costly models and new approaches. The changes are not confined to the form and content of day care, since a new system of central government grants to district starting in 1987 will give each district greater autonomy in the provision of day care (see 1.4 and 1.7). The outcome of these processes have been much debated in Denmark, not only among politicians but also among personnel, experts and parents.

1.2 Provision and management

According to the Act relating to Social Assistance each of the 275 local authorities is responsible for the provision of day care services for its own local population. The local authority is responsible for both the provision of the necessary number of places in day care institutions and for the administrative and educational supervision of centres and subsidized family day care.

The obligation to provide day-care services can be met either by the local authority's establishing and running its own day-care institutions or by making agreements with private organizations. Thus, voluntary organizations, employers, parents' cooperatives and so on provide and run day-care services with the approval of the local authority.

Day care may also be arranged by the local authority in a private home as "formidlet dagpleje" known here as subsidized family day care. Originally this form of day care was seen as a supplement to day care in institutions. From 1981 subsidized family day care is regarded as being equivalent to institutional day care (6).

With the approval of the local authority certain types of day care may be established by private individuals, such as a "skovbørnhave", (literally a kindergarten in the forest) which are part-time mainly outdoor, arrangements for more than 5 children. Such arrangements may be subsidized from public funds.

A private individual may receive 2 children under the age of 14 into private day care without the approval of the local authority. Here, too, there is no subsidy from public funds, nor is there any form of supervision by the local authority.

The local authority's responsibility is specified in the Act relating to Social Assistance thus, §69: "...the local council shall provide for the necessary number of places to be available in day-care institutions for children and young persons..." The Act does not specify what is meant by the term "necessary number of places". Parents in need of day care services have accused the local authorities of not fulfilling their obligations, and have in one case brought the issue before the Court (3o) in order to clarify the meaning of the statement.

1.3 Regulations

The general structure of collective day-care services is set out in the Act relating to Social Assistance of 1974 with later amendments. On a national basis day-care services lie within the province of the Ministry of Social Affairs. The Ministry lays down guidelines covering the management and operation of day care institutions. (Some of the most important guidelines and recommendations from recent years are listed among the references as nos 5-10).

In the 14 counties, the county councils may supervise the management of day-care institutions, but usually this is not done. The county council is also in charge of day-care institutions for children with severe physical or mental handicaps, whose need for treatment or care cannot be met by the local district day-care institutions.

Locally the municipal council is responsible for the provision of day-care facilities which conform with the guidelines drawn up by the Ministry. The local social welfare committee (appointed by the municipal council) is charged with supervising the conditions under which children live within its area and with supporting parents in the upbringing and care of their children. The committee is also responsible for the organization and supervision of subsidized family day care and for approving the homes of the child-minders. Day-care services (centres and family day care) are administered by the district health and welfare office.

Day-care institutions have to conform to standards laid down in the Act relating to Social Assistance and other Acts, like the Work Environment Act, and to regulations concerning the standard of the building, standards of hygiene, precautions against fire, kitchen standards, and norms for bombshelters, and so on.

According to the Act on Social Assistance it is left to each individual municipality to decide on the number and type of institutions, the ratio of trained to untrained in the staff, hours of opening, staff working hours, the staff to child ratio and the size of the children's groups. This local autonomy has led to considerable variation in the services offered.

The municipal and county councils are instructed to draw up 4-year plans for the social and health services of the district. The plans are revised annually, and are submitted to the Ministry of Social Affairs, which ensures that the local authorities fulfil their obligation to provide social and health services, with due concern for the use of resources. The Minister may, and sometimes does, comment on these plans, e.g. on the level of coverage of day-care services.

Some local authorities employ educational advisors to supervise this aspect of the day-care institutions. These advisors also liaise with and advise the local authority, the staff of day-care institutions, the parents, and the boards of governors of private day-care institutions. Subsidized family day care is directed by a supervisor (with assistants) who approves the home, and advises and supervises the child-minder. The allocation of places in day-care centres and in subsidized family day care is organized by a special assignment office, usually situated within the local social welfare administration, where parents may apply for admission of their children. As the demand exceeds the supply in many districts, parents may face a waiting period, depending on the waiting list.

No changes in regulations are planned except for the changes in day-care financing which will begin Jan. 1, 1987 (see 1.4).

Unregulated day care

Private individuals may care for two children on a regular basis without the approval of the local authority (the social welfare committee). Some municipalities have granted social assistance to parents who make use of such private arrangements because their children have not been admitted to public day care. This practice has been regarded as an indirect public support of "shadow" child-minding. The Minister has requested that it ceases.

Recent data on unregulated day-care seem very scarce. A report prepared for the Royal Commission on Children in 1978 (quoted in (1)) pointed out that unregulated day care then possibly encompassed more children than regulated day care. Since then the increase in public day care services may have put an end to the unregulated types of care. However, in 1980 80% of the mothers of the under 3's were in employment, while approximately 40% of the children aged 0-2 were in public day care facilities, which indicates that various forms of unregulated day care may still be in use.

1.4 Funding of day care

Day-care services are provided by the local authority or by private bodies. State subsidies for the running of day-care institutions whether publicly or privately owned, cover 50% of the rent and 50% of the running costs not covered by parental fees, up to a certain limit.

From 1 January 1987, a new system of government grants is being introduced: local authorities will receive block grants instead of, as formerly, specific grants ear-marked for particular areas like pre-school care (25). What the impact will be on local provision of day care and on e.g. parental payment remains to be seen.

Tax relief is generally not granted to providers or managers or parents.

1.5 Parental payment

For children in day-care centres and in subsidized family day care fees paid by parents cover 35% of the running costs of day care, excluding rent. Expenses not covered by fees and state subsidies are defrayed by the local authority. The local authority decides whether to charge a standard fee, according to the category of day care based on the average for the district, or individual fees based on the costs of each institution (10). Many local authorities subsidize parental payments, for example so that the fees for children aged 0-2 can be kept at the same level as those for children aged 3-6, although the cost per place for an under 3 almost doubles that for an older child. In 1986 168 of the 275 municipalities granted a total of DK 605 mill. to keep parental fees down (23).

Fees generally vary according to opening hours and hours of attendance. Siblings may obtain a reduced price. In special cases the district social welfare committee may grant reduction of fees. Parental payment varies with annual income, and is graded according to standards set by the Ministry for the whole country. Parents whose joint income is less than DK 40,001 per annum pay nothing, and those who together earn DK 135,001 or more will pay full fees (10). Of all the children attending public day care in 1985, 23% payed reduced fees, see Table 5.

Parental fees varied considerably between the municipalities. For creches ("vuggestuene") for children under 3, fees varied from DK 670 - 1740 per month, and for day nurseries ("børnehavene") for the 3-6 year olds from DK 670 to 1050. In family day care fees varied from DK 670 - 1310 per month (21).

The Minister of Social Affairs is considering introducing a more pronounced income differentiation as a basis for parental payment.

1.6 Major national issues

Some of the major national issues are already mentioned under 1.1 and 1.4. The Minister of Social Affairs has requested that the municipalities investigate alternative forms of day care, aiming at greater flexibility in local planning, development of less costly day care services, and greater parental involvement in day care (see 1.1).

The drive towards innovation and cost reduction and the alterations in the system of local government grants (see 1.4) may result in a considerable restructuring of the day-care services. How the new system of block grants will affect local policies on day care is not known. Whether day care become a high-priority local issue, remains to be seen. The number and types of places in day care may be affected, and also parental payment.

The new grant system is supposed to give the local authorities greater autonomy in dealing with local issues, and also a greater concern with real costs. However, the approach does not necessarily ensure equal access for all children, nor improvement of the services.

Experts are expressing a growing concern with the institutionalization or "ghettoization" of childhood. This is one aspect of a lively Danish pedagogical debate, which may contribute to the development of new approaches in pre-school education and care.

1.7 Proposals/programmes

The demand for day-care services will be influenced by developments within the educational system. Several municipalities have expressed an interest in experimenting with an early school start. From 1986 children may start pre-school from age of 4 years 10 months (26). The statutory school-age, which is 7, will not be changed, at least for the time being.

Moreover, the Minister of Social Affairs is considering a proposal for extending maternity leave. If this is put into effect the demand for day care for very young children will be reduced.

The Minister is considering changes in parental payment (see 1.5).

Whether the opening hours of day-care centres should be better adapted to the working hours of parents is also an issue.

2. Day care for Pre-school Children

2.1 Number of pre-school children

Statutory school age in Denmark is 7. Altogether there were 380,379 children aged 0-6 per Jan. 1, 1986, of whom 157,018 were 0-2 years old and 223,361 were aged 3-6.

2.2-2.3 Mothers in employment

Data from the 1980 Level of Living study show that 80% of the mothers of children under 3 and 81% of the mothers of children aged 3-6 were in employment.

Standard working hours in Denmark are 40 hours per week (from 1987 39 hours). In 1978 the Royal Commission on Child Care estimated that 20% of the mothers of pre-school children were not employed, while 40% worked part-time and 40% full time. More recent data are not available, but a substantial proportion of mothers with children under school age still work full time.

2.4 Single parent families

Of the 16,876 children aged 0-2 living with a single parent as of Jan. 1, 1985, 16,453 or 97% were living in a woman-headed family Of the 35,444 children aged 3-6 years living with a single parent, 32,871, that is 93%, were living in a woman-headed family (25).

2.5 Forms of day care

In Denmark there are two different categories of day-care institutions, the "alminnelige" or ordinary ones, and the "særlige" or special ones. The special institutions are provided by the counties for children with severe handicaps, whose requirements cannot be met in the ordinary institutions.

The ordinary day care facilities comprise day care in centres and family day care. For children under 3 day care is provided in
- creches ("vuggestuer")
- infants' divisions ("småbørnsstuer") for the youngest children in institutions with separate age groups
- day-care centres for mixed age groups covering the age 0-10 or 0-14
- subsidized family day care ("formidlet dagpleje").

For children aged 3-6 day care is provided in:
- day nurseries ("børnehaver")
- day care centres for mixed age groups covering the age 0-10 or 0-14
- subsidized family day care
- recreation centres (for children attending pre-school classes)

For both age groups private, unregistered day-care arrangements are also in use.

In most districts children aged 5-6 years are given the opportunity to attend pre-school on a part-time basis. Pre-school is often combined with additional care or supervision.

In addition to these forms of day care, which have a registered attendance, there are a diversity of part-time play groups and play activities where attendance often is not controlled.

2.6 Number of children in each form of day care listed above

The annual registration figures include information on children in the public day care system only (that is children in public institutions, in private, approved institutions and subsidized family day care (see Table 1).

Table 1. Children in public day care by age and type of institution, January 1985.

	Number of children registered						% of age group		
Years	Creches	Day nurseries	Recreation centres	Age integr. institutions	Subsidized family day care	Total	Day care institutions	Family day care	Total
0	4098	49	-	614	7.615	12.376	9.2	14.7	23.9
1	8763	202	-	1.348	14.574	24.887	20.2	28.6	48.8
2	8048	3.926	-	2.052	14.801	28.827	26.5	28.0	54.6
3	640	21.417	31	4.675	7.603	34.366	50.4	14.3	4.7
4	28	28.932	44	6.251	4.121	39.376	61.4	7.2	68.6
5	19	29.555	233	6.743	3.070	39.620	61.5	5.2	66.7
6	10	11.065	6.107	5.489	2.492	25.163	36.5	4.0	40.5

Source: Danmarks Statistik: Social sikring og retsvæsen
Statistiske Efterretninger, 1986:2

For children aged 0-2 subsidized family day care is the form of day care most commonly used, especially for 0-1-year-olds.
For children aged 3-6 day care in institutions, particularly day nurseries, is the most common.

As shown in Table 1 access to public day care varies considerably according to age. One in 4 of the children under 1 year are admitted to public day care, as are more than half of the children aged 1-3 years. Of the children aged 3-5, 2 out of 3 have access to public day care. Forty per cent of the 6-year -olds are in public day care. However, more than 90% of children this age attend pre-school classes, and the 6-year-olds often combine pre-school and public day care.

Denmark has the highest level of public day care provision in Scandinavia. Even so, a considerable minority of children aged 0-5 do not have access to public day care. The waiting lists indicate that at least for some of the non-admitted children, public day-care services are preferred to the child-care arrangements actually in use for the child. Surveys of forms of care for children outside the public day-care system have not been done in recent years.

2.7 Unregulated day care

These are no estimates of the number of children in unregulated day care. When the employment rates of mothers are compared with the supply of public day care, children aged 0-2 appear as the ones most likely to be found in such forms of day care.

3. Forms of Day Care: Children Aged 0-2

3A Subsidized Family Day Care ("formidlet dagpleje")

3.1 Provision and management

Subsidized family day care is regarded as an integral part of the public day care services. The local authority arrange for day-care in private homes, and employ the child-minder. Commonly this form of day care is organized in the home of the minder. Lately different organizational models have been tried out, encouraged by the Ministry of Social Affairs and the National Board of Social Welfare, (see Section 3 A,11).

In January 1985 there were 16,000 registered child-minders caring for 58,200 children (3).

3.2 Age of children, length of stay

Subsidized family day care is primarily used for children under 3 (see Table 1) but may also be used for older children. Normally the children can be looked after for up to 43 hours a week. If parents have irregular working hours individual arrangements can be made. Of the 58,218 children in subsidized family day care 43% were registered for 32 hours or less, so-called "half-time" attendance (3).

3.3 Staff

The child-minder in subsidized family day care is approved by the local social welfare committee and employed by the local authority. No professional training is required for employment in this form of day care, but supervision and guidance is offered by the family day-care supervisor's office. Several of the local authorities offer two-week courses and supplementory training for those employed as child-minders. A selection of introductory literature and teaching material has been prepared especially for this group of day-care personell by the National Board of Social Welfare (15,19,22). No generalizations can be made as to the individual capabilities of the child-minders for caring for children of different religious, ethenic or cultural groups.

3.4 Size of unit

In subsidized family day care the child-minder may take on up to 5 children. In January 1985 the staff/child ratio (when hours of attendance were transformed into full time places) was 3.64 (3) The working week of the child-minder ought not to exceed 50 hours, from the arrival of the first child to the departure of the latest.

3.5 Parent-staff cooperation

Close cooperation between the parents and the child-minder is necessary in order to provide continuity in the children's everyday life. Because of the multiplicity of arrangements included under this form of day care no generalizations can be made.

Parents may receive advice and guidance at the local family day-care supervisor's office.

3.6 Range of activities

The local family day-care office provides the homes with play material, toys, and so on.

3.7 Educational concerns and projects

Educational and psychological councelling is available.

3.8 Access

The local social welfare committee is responsible for the allocation of available places in the district where the parents and/or children are domiciled. Special consideration should be given to (5):
a. children from single parent families and children for whom day care is recommended by a physician or by other departments of the local authority
b. children from dual-income families
c. siblings of children who attend the institution
d. children with special educational or social needs.

Otherwise all children may be accepted into public day care, provided that the parents so wish, and that there are places available.

As noted above, this form of day care is particularly intended for children aged 0-2, but older children do gain access, cp. Table 1.

3.9 Advantages and disadvantages

Subsidized family day care is regarded as preferable for many children, because of its resemblance to ordinary family life, with a single adult and a small group of other children, usually of similar ages.

There is less risk of infection in this form of day care than in institutions in which the child is in contact with many more children. For children who have problems adjusting to larger groups, and for delicate children, subsidized family day care may be preferred. This form of day care is more flexible as regards hours of attendance and may also be easier for parents who work at inconvenient hours.

The advantage of subsidized family day care for the local authority is that it is more flexible and is less costly than day care centres.

For some parents, especially those of very young children the lack of choice as regards the form of day care may cause problems. Some may, for example, prefer a day-care centre, because it offers better educational and other facilities and will not necessarily be satisfied with family day care. Problems may arise for example when the child-minder is ill, or on holiday, if the child(ren) have to be moved to another private home.

Disadvantages that have been registered for the child-minder are social isolation, lack of contact with colleaques, inadequate training, conflicts between the demands of the job and the demands of the child-minder's family, and so on (1).

In some districts the high turnover among the registered child-minders create problems for the children, the parents, and the local authority.

Some of the problems mentioned are being tackled in experiments with new structures in this forms of day care (see section 3 A, 3.11)

3.10 Economy

Subsidized family day care is financed according to the same conditions as day-care centres. The parents' fees cover 1/3 of the running costs, while the state and the municipality cover the remaining of the costs, with 1/3 each. From January 1, 1987 the running costs will be covered by the parents and the municipality. (For the changes in day care financing see 1.4). The cost per place varies with the level of services offered in each municipality. For the country as a whole the average annual cost per place in family day care is DK 34,600 (25).

3.11 Innovations

A report prepared for the Royal Commission on Children in 1980 (1) contained several proposals for improving the quality of subsidized family day care. It was suggested that some formal training be required for the child-minder, that a close cooperation between family day care and institutional day care be established, that the advisory and guidance services should be extended, that parents be given more influence, and so on. Several of these proposals have been followed up (see 1.2-1.3).

The government encourages local authorities to try out more flexible forms of day care (12), see also Social Assistance Act, §138 (11). Some local suthorities have arranged for groups of child-minders to provide day care in the child's home. Two or three children from one neighbourhood may be cared for in the home of one of the children. The person in charge is employed by the local authority after consultation with the parents. The local family day-care director supervises the arrangement.

Another type of arrangement is for a married couple to provide day care for more than 5 children in the couple's home.

Various forms of contact and cooperation have been established among several family day care homes. In some places groups of approximately 8 child-minders work together, cooperating as regards training courses and vacations, and substituting for one another during sick leave. It is regarded as important that all the children involved know all the child-minders.

Sometimes a day-care centre may be in charge of a number of home-based child-minders, who form an integrated part of the institution's activity. In such cases supervision is not provided by the local authority, and the centre may employ extra staff to deal with the family day-care arrangements. In cases of illness of the child-minder, the children will be cared for at the centre with which they have become acquainted (12). Some of the problems encountered in the experiments with new forms of family day care are outlined in (28).

3B. Crèches ("vuggestuer")

3.1 Provision and management

Crèches, or day nurseries for babies and small children are set up either by the local authority or by independent private bodies, with whom the local authority makes an agreement. At the municipal level crèches are administered by the local health and welfare office. The daily running of the crèches is the responsibility of the director who cooperates with the rest of the staff, and who is responsible for the educational program of the institution (5).

In January 1985 there were 63o creches in operation attended by 21,600 children (3), see Table 3.

3.2 Age of children; hours of attendance

Crèches are usually provided for children aged 0-2 years, but some older children are also admitted, (see Table 1). Most of these institutions are open 10-12 hours a day. Average hours of attendance of the children were 9-10 in 1980 (21).

3.3 Staff

In the crèches the children are cared for by professionally trained staff, and by untrained assistants. In addition the staff comprises cleaning, kitchen and administrative personnel.

The professional staff has 3 years of training from a Teachers' Training College or equivalent institution

Extramural training courses are held for day care staff. The training of Danish pre-school and kindergarten teachers is generally considered to be of a high standard, and prepares them to work with children and families of different social and cultural backgrounds.

Public day-care services normally do not include volunteers.

3.4 Size of units

Ordinarily the crèches consist of 2-3, or at most 4 groups, each numbering 10-12 children. The staff/child ratio is 2/10-12, when children are admitted on a full-time basis. Each group is usually staffed by one professionally trained and one assistant. The staff/child ratio and ratio of trained to untrained staff is decided upon by each local authority (see 1.3 above).

3.5 Parental involvement

Close cooperation between parents and day-care institutions is regarded as necessary to establish continuity between the child's everyday life at home and in the institution.

It is the task of the day-care institution in cooperation with the parents to create an environment for the child that complements the upbringing of the home and that contributes to the development of independence and skills in the child (25). Regulations ensure that parents have a say in the running of the individual institution. Parents' representatives are elected to the Board of governors of private institutions. In the municipal institutions parents participate in the parents' council (13).

3.6 Range of activities

The program of the day-care institutions are described in general terms as follows (April 1983):

> "The institutions shall cooperate with the parents to create a secure environment for the children which will complement the child's upbringing in the home, thus helping to create an open-minded, independent, and cooperative person.
>
> Besides caring for and looking after the children, which tasks become less demanding as the child grows older, the day-care institutions are required to support the child in its physical and mental development.
>
> The children are given the opportunity to gain knowledge and training in various skills by playing with other children and adults or engaging in other activities. They learn to be more tolerant of other people's views and to formulate their own views and make their own observations.
>
> Through independent play, projects, creative and musical activities etc., these institutions contribute to furthering the children's social and linguistic development. The educators' choice of means and methods are continually adjusted to the needs of the children and to the individual situations." (18).

In the crèches emphasis is laid on educational activities being integrated with the extensive care which children in this age group need. The individual child is encouraged to develop physically and emotionally in interaction with adult staff and with the other children. The child's social and linguistic development is stimulated by varied forms of play and other creative activities. Independence is encouraged as well as tolerance and cooperation.

The planning of activities is flexible, and aims at adjusting both to the needs of the individual child and to the needs of the group as a whole. Excursions, visits to the library, theatre or cinema are included in the institutions' activities.

3.7 Educational concerns

The crèches form part of the educational services offered to preschool children, and they have an educational basis. The educational advisors employed by the local authority offer advice and support to staff and parents. Educational and psychological councelling is also available.

3.8 Access

Decisions concerning admission to public day care are made by the local health and welfare committee. Special consideration may be given to certain groups of children (see Section 3A, 3.8). As shown in Table 1 the supply of public day care in crèches covers approximately 2o% of the children aged o - 2, and the demand in many districts exceeds supply.

3.9 Advantages and disadvantages

The main advantage of the crèches is the quality of the staff. The crèches are run by experts specially trained for working with groups of young children. Another advantage of this form of day care is that the care is continuous and is not disrupted by cases of illness among the staff.

Exposure to infection among children and staff is a frequently mentioned disadvantage. Opening hours may cause problems, as these do not necessarily correspond to the parents' working hours. Day-care centres that are usually open during ordinary work hours cannot meet the demands of families who work at night or at inconvenient hours.

3.10 Costs

Crèches and subsidized family day care are financed according to the same system as other day-care institutions (see 1.4 above). For the country as a whole the average annual cost per place is DK 71,5oo (25).

3.11 Innovations

A series of experimental projects are trying out new ideas in creche management, for example:

- an intensification of parental-institution cooperation,
- opening up the institutions to all families with young children in the neighbourhood,
- development of counselling services, for example for single parent families and other families who need support in questions concerning early socialization and upbringing (25).

C. Day Nurseries - ("børnehaver")

3.1 Provision and management

In 1985 there were 2,200 day nurseries in operation, attended by 93,803 children (on provision and management see Section B, 3.1)

3.2 Age of children; hours of attendance

These day nurseries("børnehavene")are day-care centres for children aged 3-6 years. Some of them accept children from the age of 2 (see Table 1). The great majority of children, almost 80,000, are aged 3-5. The centres may operate with separate or mixed age groups.

Most day-care centres for this age group are open the whole day, i.e. 10-12 hours. There are day nurseries with shorter hours intended for children of families where one or both parents are at home or work shorter hours. In 1985, 14,300 children attended part time, while 82,300 were registered in full time places, see Table 3.

3.3 Staff

In 1985 day nurseries had 16,000 full time employees of whom ca. 9,200 were trained as kindergarten teachers or nurses, while ca. 6,800 had no professional training (see also Section B, 3.3). Thus, for every 100 day nursery places there were altogether 17.1 full-time employees of whom 9.8 were prefessionally trained (3).

3.4 Size of unit

Most day nurseries for the 3-6 year olds have 2-3 groups of about 20 children. The maximum for the group of children under three is about 12 children.

3.5 Parental influence, see section B, 3.5.

3.6 Range of activities

The educational program of the day nurseries is a continuation of that of the crèches but greater emphasis is placed on learning, on the acquisition of knowledge and practical and intellectual skills. Structured educational activities form part of the daily program, but in such a way that the children alternate between free play and planned activities.

Normally no meals are provided except for breakfast for the children who arrive early (between 6 a.m. and 8.a.m.) and a light meal in the afternoon consisting of fruit/milk. In some day nurseries children aged 5-6 also attend part-time pre-school classes (see 2.5).

When children are ill a home help employed by the local authority may look after them in their own home, a service for which the parents pay an income-differentiated sum.

3.7 Educational concerns, see Section B, 3.7.

3.8 Access

Day nurseries are provided for the age group 3-6. In districts where day care is in short supply, waiting lists may be established (see section A, 3.8). There is considerable variation between districts as regards the percentage of children aged 3-6 who have access to public day care. In 1983 when 56% of the age group attended public day care, the districts with the highest level of coverage provided for 86% and those with the lowest for 22%, (27) see Table 6.

3.8 Advantages and disadvantages

Danish day-care centres are generally considered to be of a high quality. The lack of flexibility of the opening hours, however, creates problems for some parents. In some districts children are offered supplementary care by a registered child-minder outside the centre's opening hours. Some parents use private unregistered child-minders to supplement centre care.

3.10 Costs

The average cost per place for the country as a whole was DK 28,100 in 1985 (see Section B, 3.10).

3.11 Innovation, see Section B, 3.11.

D. Age-Integrated Day Care Institutions

3.1 Management and Provision

In 1985 there were 705 day-care centres for mixed age groups. Of the approximately 38,300 children attending, about 6,400 were aged 0-6 years. On provision and management, see Section B, 3.1.

3.2 Age of children, hours of attendance

Day-care centres for mixed age groups accept children of a wider range of ages than the traditional institutions, usually 0-14 years. The majority are open the whole day. Some of them, however, take a few children on a part-time basis, see Table 3.

3.3 Staff

Of the approximately 7,000 staff 4,000 were professionally trained (see Section B, 3.3).

3.4 Size of units

Day-care centres for mixed age groups range widely in size, from 30 to 200 children. For every 100 places there was a total of 16.1 personell of whom 10.5 were professionally trained (3).

3.5 - 3.8, see Section B, 3.5 - 3.8

3.9 Advantages and disadvantages

The contact between children of different ages may have a positive effect on the younger children's linguistic and intellectual development, and may contribute to the older children's socialization. Siblings may attend the same institution irrespective of their age.

E. Recreational Centres ("Fritidshjem" og "skolefritidshjem")

3.1 Provision and Management

In 1985 Denmark had 902 recreational centres, with 47,536 places. The centres are provided by the local social welfare committee according to the Act relating to Social Assistance, or by the local schools.

3.2 Age of children, hours of attendance

The recreational centres are intended primarily for the age group 6-10 years. As shown in Table 1, the majority of the children attending belong to this age group. The centres are often open for 10 to 12 hours a day. Most children attend in the early morning and between 12 and 5 p.m.

3.3 Staff

Of the 6,400 employees 2,000 were professionally trained (3).

3.4 Size of unit

Most recreation centres contain between 40 and 80 children. For every 100 places there was a total of 13.4 staff of whom 8.3 were trained.

3.5 Parental influence. Data missing.

3.6 Range of activities

The recreation centres are supplements to the school, activating the children in their spare time through play, sports and other activities. In addition the children are given an opportunity to be with other children and adults, when they have finished school for the day and need to relax and talk about their day.

F. Pre-School Classes ("Børnehaveklasser").

In Denmark the local authorities have to provide places in pre-school classes for children 1-2 years before statutory school age. The pre-school classes are held in the local schools and are administered by the local education authority. The local authority carry all expenditures on pre-school provision. In 1984 59,013 children attended pre-school classes corresponding to more than 90% of the 6-year olds (4). Pre-schooling is voluntary.

In 1985 the criteria for admittance were changed so that children can be admitted to pre-school from the age of 4 year 10 months, provided that the child is considered capable of following pre-school education and then go straight on to school, starting earlier than the statutory school age (26). The local education authority decides whether to introduce the early school-start and other aspects of pre-school classes.

Pre-school is part time, 3-4 hours per day. Children from dual-earner families therefore commonly need supplementary care, which may be provided by a recreation centre, a day-care centre, subsidized family day care, or by unregistered, private child-minders.

The early school-start is regarded as part of a new coordinated introduction to school for children in pre-school and the first two years in elementary school. The children may be grouped according to age or in mixed age groups. Experiments with different structures are encouraged.

The lower age limit for starting school or pre-school has been much debated in Denmark, by parents, educational experts, and politicians, see also 1.6.

4. Access to Day care; Availability; Distribution

4.1 Access to day care

In principle public day care is available to all parents who wish to make use of it. However, since the supply of day care does not meet the demands in many districts, local authorities are instructed to establish assignment offices for the distribution of available places.

Priority may be given to children of single parents, and to children for whom a place is requested by other local authorities or by a medical doctor, to children from dual-earner families, and to children whose siblings have already been admitted to public day care, and to children with special educational or social needs (5,11). See also 1.3.

There are considerable differences between regions and districts districts as to the forms of day care available and in the proportion of children in different age groups in public day care. Nationally there are considerable differences in the ages og children admitted to day care. The proportion of 3-6 year-olds is much larger than that of younger children, see Table 6.

Studies made by the Social Research Institute in the mid-seventies showed that children from families with well-educated mothers, and from the middle and upper socio-economic groups were overrepresented in day care (29).

Once a child has been admitted to day care, she or he may not lose their place except for very strong reasons. Lack of parental payment, and the needs of other children on the waiting list are not considered strong enough reasons(7). However, children may lose their places if the parents become unemployed.This practice, which is debated in Denmark, has increased lately according to the National Board of Social Welfare(20). Some local authorities consider that unemployed parents may well look after their own children. In order to receive unemployment benefits the law states that the recipients are to be at the disposal of the labour market. If the unemployed parents do get a job, several municipalities immediately offer a place in day care.

4.2 Assessment of need for day care

Some local authorities assess the need for day care from waiting lists or from local investigations. The National Board of Social

Welfare publishes an annual overview of developments and trends based on the health and welfare plans submitted by the municipalities and the counties. The Social Research Institute has made assessments of the national demands for day care (27).

4.3 Information

Each district has a central office that allocates places and gives information where parents may obtain information. Some districts have registers of all day care institutions. The individual institutions often send out their own information, presenting themselves and their activities and programs.

4.4 Geographical distribution

The metropolitan area of Copenhagen and the larger cities have a larger proportion of children in day care than the rest of the municipalities. In the rural districts family day care is more common than in the urban districts. Play-groups and play-grounds, run by private bodies and usually open for only a few hours a week are most often found in the rural area. See also 4.1.

In Southern Jutland where there are German-speaking minorities, the children from minority families are supposed to be given priority in day care institutions for the relevant minority group, if the parents so wish, even if the institution is situated in a district where the parents are not domiciled (14).

Day care for children with handicaps may be provided in an ordinary day-care institution, or in a special division for handicapped children in an ordinary local institution. For severely handicapped children special arrangements for day care are provided by the county.

4.5 Coordination

Coordination is the responsibility of the local assignment office. The form and number of day care facilities are considered locally every year in connection with health and welfare planning (see 1.3).

4.6 Equitable access, see 4.1.

5. General Issues

5.1 Advantages and disadvantages, see Section A-D, 3.9.

5.2 New developments

Research and development on day care is supported by the National Board of Social Welfare and also by the National Research Council. As noted earlier (1.6-1.7) the public day care services are in a process of change, which aims at a restructuring of the organizational forms, and encourages the development of unconventional educational approaches.

A series of trial projects are carried out, dealing with new educational practices within institutions or aiming to meet unsatisfied needs. Many of the projects are interdisciplinary and cross-sectional (16, 23). The following are some of the issues addressed in recent experimental projects:

- Children's self-administration in relation to the educational practice
- Traffic education in day-care institutions
- Physical training in day-care institutions and recreational centres
- Music therapy for the promotion of linguistic ability in children
- Parental cooperation in day care
- Integration of Turkish children in Danish day-care institutions
- Day-care institutions for children in acute crises
- Day care for sick children
- Coordination and improvement of the use of resources for recreation centres for children and young people aged 0-18 years.

5.3-5.4 Cost benefit analyses, etc. No data available.

Summary

In Denmark the provision of day care is part of the social welfare policy. The general aims of day care are set by the central government, but the provision, quality and management of day care facilities is the responsibility of each municipality. The decentralized approach encourages local involvement in day care and accomodation to local needs, wishes and demands, but does not necessarily contribute to equal access between districts.

The local autonomy in the provision of day care has resulted in considerable regional variations as to the forms of day care offered and the proportion of children admitted. The rural areas seem to have opted more for family day care and private, part-time arrangements, while institutional day care is more common in urban areas. Access to day care also varies according to age groups, a far larger proportion of older pre-school children, aged 3-6, being admitted to public or subsidized day care than the under 3's.

Denmark was the first of the Scandinavian countries to provide day care services for "mass consumption". Danish day care is generally considered to be of high quality, and so is the education of the pre-school teachers. Emphasis on local autonomy in day-care provision has contributed to a diversity of day-care arrangements, both private and public. Research and development in the day-care sector covers a wide variety of projects, dealing with educational content, new administrative structure, increased parental cooperation and cooperation with families and children who do not attend public day-care services, experiments with developing day-care as a neighbourhood resource.

The provision and management of day care in Denmark are at present undergoing a process of restructuring, both economically and with respect to form and content. The changes in local government financing starting in 1987 will leave day care financing entirely to the local authority, with possible long-term implication for the quantity and quality of places provided as well as for the parental fees.

Changes in the school system involving a voluntary reduction of the pre-school entrance age to 4 years 10 months, and an extended coordination between pre-school and the first years of elementary school call for new forms of cooperation between the day care, pre-school and school systems. Their long-term influence on each other, remains to be seen.

The lowering of the age at which children are allowed to begin school and pre-school may reduce the number of children for which full-time day care is necessary, as will a proposed extension of maternity leave. For the age groups 5-6 the day care services may be altered, e.g. supplementing the part-time teaching offered in pre-school and in the first years at school.

Recently the Ministry of Social Affairs has on several occasion requested that the municipalities develop new and less costly forms of day care facilities, with greater flexibility and more parental cooperation. The development of alternative structures has been supported economically by the research and development grants from the National Board of Social Welfare.

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Tables 2 - 6

Table 2. Children registered in day care institutions, by age, Jan.'85 and Jan.'86

Years	Number registered Jan.-85	Number registered Jan.-86	Increase 1985-86	Percentage of children in age group Jan.-85	Percentage of children in age group Jan.-86
0-2	66,091	68,265	3.3	42.5	43.5
3-6	138,524	139,462	0.7	59.7	62.4

Source: Danmarks Statistik, Socialstatistik 1986:6

Table 3. Day care institutions, 16 January 1985

	Institu-ions	Places	Children registered Full time	Children registered Part time
Total	4,447	201,415	183,689	19,973
Municipal institutions	2,692	124,646	115,448	9,157
Privately owned institutions	1,755	76,769	68,241	10,822
Creches	630	21,730	21,293	314
Day nurseries	2,210	93,803	82,312	14,302
Recreation centres	902	47,536	44,366	2,066
Age-integr. institutions	705	38,346	35,718	3,291

Source: Danmarks Statistik, Statistiske Efterretninger 1986:2 (3)

Table 4. Subsidized family day care Jan. 1980, Jan. 1985

	Number of employees	Number of children Full time	Number of children Part time	Total	Child/ staff
Jan. 1980	18,835	53,630	7,788	61,418	3.05
Jan. 1985	15,987	33,266	24,952	58,218	3.64

Source: Danmarks Statistik 1986:6 (3).

Table 5. Number of children paying reduced fees in day care centres and subsidized family day care, 16.1.1985

	Children paying reduced fees				
	Degree of reduction			Total with reduced fees	Total number of of children registered
	1-39%	40-99%	100%		
Day care centres	10,911	14,795	24,925	50,631	203,662
Subsidized family day care	2,275	3,164	3,856	9,295	58,218
Total	13,186	17,959	28,781	59,926	261,880

Source: Danmarks Statistik, Statistiske Efterretninger 1986:2 (3)

Table 6. The highest and lowest municipal day-care coverage (in percentages) for children aged 0-2 and 3-6, 1983

Age	Highest coverage	National coverage	Lowest coverage
0 - 2	72.8	40.8	13.1
3 - 6	85.8	56.2	22.1

Source: Bertelsen og Linde, SFI publication 141 (27).

PART III

DAY CARE IN NORWAY

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1. Policy and Objectives

1.1 Purposes and policies

In Norway the provision of public day care forms part of the general family policy and is one of several measures adopted for the benefit of families with young children. Within this general context, day care serves a number of purposes. It offers pre-school education, it is integrated with general social policy, and it provides social assistance to those in need. Day care thus fulfils functions for the individual child, the family, and society as a whole (9, 10, 12).

The educational and social advantages of high-quality day care for the individual child are often pointed out. It is generally assumed that most children will benefit from some experience of day care during the pre-school years. Moreover high-quality day-care services are conceived of as serving more specific purposes, e.g. as compensating for disadvantages or "positive discrimination", or as part of an early prevention programme. Day-care legislation explicitly states that priority in admission to public day-care must be given to children with handicaps, on condition that the child will benefit from the type of day care offered.

The provision of high-quality public day care has been regarded as part of a universal "benefit scheme" for all young families, regardless of the employment status or family situation of the parents. More specifically, day-care services are regarded as helping parents with special needs, e.g. the single-parent families, families with special problems, or low-income families with two wage-earners. Provision of day care is also regarded as essential in promoting the government's aim of attaining greater equality between women and men in the labour market and in the division of responsibility within the family.

As stated by the Storting, (Parliament) the long-term aim of public day-care policy is to provide for all children under statutory school-age whose parents want this type of service (13). At present the demand for public day care far exceeds the supply. Only 28% of the children of pre-school age have access to day care services approved by public authorities. All the above-mentioned aims of public day care cannot therefore be fulfilled.

Since 1975 collective day care is regulated by special legislation. "Lov om barnehager", literally the Act governing Kindergartens, defines "barnehage" as a daytime activity based on educational principles, for children of pre-school age.[1] (In the present context "barnehage" will be translated as "day care").

The introduction of the Act on Day Care had two aims: to stimulate the local authorities to develop local day-care facilities, and as stated in the first provision of the Act, to provide a good environment for development and activity for children in close cooperation with the children's home. In 1983 a clause was added stating a further aim, namely that public day care shall help to give children an upbringing in accordance with basic Christian values. (Norway has a Protestant Lutheran state's church). Privately run day-care centres may choose to omit this clause from their statutes (5).

All governments since 1975 have aimed at increasing the number of places available. A slight reduction in the area and personnel requirements per child was decided on by the previous government in order to allow more children into the existing institutions. The present government (which only took office in May,1986) has promised to increase the economic subsidies for day care, and to increase the number of new places per year from the approximately 4,500 of recent years to 10,000 in 1989 (see also 1.7). Whether private interests should be invited to participate more actively in day care provision is at present being debated locally and at central government level.

1.2 Provision and management

"The public day-care system" commonly refers to all forms of day care

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1) In Norwegian day-care statistics all forms of public day-care and private day-care approved by the authorities are termed "barnehager", whether they are open all day or part-time, regardless of the age of the children or the type of educational training offered.

supervised and approved by the authorities and subsidized by public funds. Approved facilities have to satisfy certain requirements specified centrally by the appropriate Ministry, thereby qualifying for state support. "Public day care" then, means "in accordance with public standards or norms", without specifying ownership or the amount of economic support.

Responsibility for the provision of day care is decentralized. Each of the 454 local authorities is charged with the planning and co-ordination of day care and is encouraged to develop day-care services in accordance with local needs. They are instructed to make 4-year plans for the development of day care, based on surveys or investigations of the local need for it. Among the factors mentioned for consideration in the Ministry's instruction are the number of children aged 0 - 6 years, the quality of local play areas, the number of children with handicaps, the number of children from single parent families and the employment situation of the parents. However there is no obligation to carry out the plan.

Local authorities, voluntary organizations, employers, parents' cooperatives and religious organizations provide and manage day care. According to day-care legislation such facilities have to be approved by the county governor if they are operated during the day time, and if

a) the children are present more than 20 hours per week,
b) there are more than 10 children present at a time if the children are over three years old, and more than five present when the children are under three, and
c) the child-care is paid for (6).

One aspect of the mixture of public and private provision of day care is shown in Table 1, which gives an overview of the owners of day-care facilities in 1984.

Table 1 Day-care services according to ownership as of December 1984

Number of facilities	Total	Public owners	Private firms	Parents and resident's organizations	Private or voluntary organizations	Religious organizations	Others
3149	100	58	2	10	19	9	3

Source: Social Statistics 1984 (15)

Of the more than 3000 approved day-care establishments in operation in 1984 close to 60% were owned by public authorities, while private bodies were the owners of 40%.

1.3 Regulations

The general structure of collective day-care services is set up in the 1975 Act on Day Care with later amendments. The act outlines the local authority's responsibilities and the administrative structure of day-care institutions and defines the qualifications needed by the staff (5).

On the national level day care is under the province of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs and Government Administration, the Division of Family Affairs and Equal Status Questions. Regulations supplementing the Act and directives specifying various issues and guidelines are issued by the Ministry, that has the final authority in questions concerning day-care services.

Regionally, in the 19 counties, the county governor has the authority to approve day-care facilities. A special member of the county governor's staff is advisor to the local authorities on questions of day care.

At the municipal level provision and supervision of day care is the responsibility of a special local committee appointed by the municipal council. The local administration of day-care services comes under the social services department or the educational authority, according to local decision (6).

The quality control of the day care is to some extent governed by legislation which regulates the size and equipment of institutions and, the ratio of qualified staff to number of children (see 3.4 for specifications). Area norms and norms for qualified staff differ according to the age of the children and the number of hours of attendance. The director of a day-care establishment has to be a qualified pre-school teacher or have an equivalent training.

In day-care centres owned by the local authorities the owners are represented on the board of directors of each institution. Before children can be admitted the premises are inspected to make sure that standard requirements are met. The local health authorities are charged with overseeing health and hygienic standards of day care institutions. Each day-care centre may call upon the local administration for advice. The councillor at the county governor's office may also provide information, arrange courses, and supervise local staff.

Unregulated day care

The greater part of the extra-familial day care organized for children aged 0 - 2 and a large proportion of the day care provided for the age group 3 - 6 is not regulated, according to 1980 survey data gathered from national representative samples of households (2).

It is assumed that the use of private day-care arrangements will decrease when the public services in this field are better developed. No further measures have been taken to regulate private, informal day care arrangements.

1.4 Policy on funding

The Norwegian National Housing Bank offers loans at relatively favourable interest rates to local authorities or interest groups who want to establish new day-care centres.

The costs of operating local public day-care facilities are divided between the state, the local authorities and the parents. In 1980 about 29% of the total running costs of day-care services were covered by the state, whereas the parents' fees represented 18% and the local authorities' outlay was about 53%. In 1981 the Ministry recommended a ratio of state to local authority of 37.5% each and parents 25% (13). At present the state contributes close to 30%, the parents' fees represent 20 - 25% and the remaining 45 - 50% is borne by the local authorities.

State subsidies are given to all day care centres provided that the county governor has approved them. Municipal support varies. Parental payment and share of costs are therefore often higher in privately owned day care centres than in those owned and run by the local authority.

Dual-income families and single working parents are entitled to tax deductions for undocumented expenditure on child care: NOK. 3,500 per year for one child under 14, and NOK. 4,500 for two children under 14. Documented expenditure on cHild care entitles parents to tax relief with upper limits of NOK. 11,000 per years for one child under 14, and NOK. 13,500 for two or more children under 14. This sum does not necessarily cover the cost to parents of full-time public day care. In private child-minding arrangements where the expenses cannot be documented, parents are entitled to the minimum deductions.

1.5 Parental payment

In public day care and in private day care approved by the authorities parents are generally required to pay part of the running costs of the facilities. Free places are given in special cases. Parental payment usually does not vary with the age of the child. Fees are based on the number of hours of attendance, and in most municipalities on the net income of the parents. For siblings a reduction in fees is common.

The level of parental payment in public day care is decided locally and varies between the municipalities, resulting in considerable differences in parental payment for relatively similar services. The Ministry's guidelines state that the level of parental payment should not involve an unreasonable economic burden for the family, and ought not exceed the costs of private day care. Generally, the level of parental payment depends on the type of day care. A full place in a public day care centre is usually less expensive than a similar place in a private one. Unregulated, paid child-minding is so far generally more expensive for the parents than public collective arrangements.

1.6 Major national issues

The general shortage of places in approved day-care centres is a subject of concern. It means that the universal aim of contributing to the welfare of all children cannot be fulfilled. The shortage of places also means that high-priority groups of children will not always gain access to public day care.

A central question is how to provide a sufficient number of places in high-quality day care at a reasonable cost. In the short term an important concern is how to minimize the regional and social differences in access to day care. There is also concern over the continual increases in parental payment.

1.7 Proposals and programmes

- Most state subsidies to local government are now being given as lump sums. However, places at day care centres are still directly subsidized, at least for the time being.
- The present government has expanded the possibilities for obtaining loans for the setting up of day care centres from the National Housing Bank.

- The new Minister for Consumer Affairs and Government Administration has started a campaign: Build More Day-Care Centres aimed at stimulating local expansion of day-care facilities. - One short term objective is to increase the number of new places per year from about 4,500 at present to 10,000 in 1989. State support for the running costs will be increased.
- Plans are being discussed for altering the educational structure of day care centres, e.g. by the introduction of a curriculum.
- Pre-school education will be available for all 6-year olds.

At the local level, as mentioned above (1.2) planning of day care programmes is the responsibility of the municipalities. It is a basic premise in day-care legislation that local interests and traditions should influence the development of day-care facilities. The forms of day care and the number of places available are therefore decided locally. Municipalities are not instructed to follow a specific time schedule for implementing their programmes. This may be changed, as an obligation to provide a certain number of places in day care is presently being discussed in central government.

2. Day-care for Pre-school Children

2.1 Number of children

In Norway the statutory school age is 7. At the end of 1985 there were approximately 362,000 children aged 0 - 6 years. Of these about 150,000 were under three years old, and about 210,000 were aged 3 to 6.

2.2 - 2.3 Participation of mothers in the labour market

In 1983 the labour market participation of married mothers whose youngest child was in the age range 0 - 2 years was 54%. The labour market participation of married mothers whose youngest child was aged 3 - 6 years, was 63%. The number of hours worked is not reported.[1]

In a national study of women's work in 1980 the wage-earning mothers of pre-school children often reported a reduction in hours of work. However, the majority of mothers, 67% of those whose youngest child was under 3, reported that they worked more than half time, that is more than 20 hours. 16% had a wage-earning week of 40 hours or more. Of the mothers whose youngest child was aged 3 - 6 years, 71% worked more than 20 hours and 20% had a wage-earning week of 40 hours or more.

Information about the labour market participation of fathers is scarce. It is estimated that 80-90% of the fathers of pre-school children are in the labour force, the majority working full time.

2.4 Single parents

Of the 141.000 families where the youngest child was under 3 in 1980, 17,050 were single parent families; 16,270 were headed by a mother, 780 by a father. Of the 141.000 families where the youngest child was aged 3 - 6 years 18,650 were single parent families; 17,400 were headed by a mother, 1,250 by a father.

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[1] Norwegian labour market statistics give the work force status of mothers by the age of the youngest child. Information is reported on married mothers only.

2.5 Forms of day care

2.5.1 Forms of day care provided for children under 3 years

Day care for children under 3 is provided by local authorities, or by private firms, groups, or associations and approved by public authorities. Approved day care, both public and private, is provided in centres where the children are grouped according to age or in groups containing a cross-section of ages. Some day care services are provided by mobile pre-school teachers, who move from area to area. Public day care for children under 3 is also organized by local authorities in private homes, approved for this purpose. Such arrangements are termed "familiebarnehage", which means "family day care". Some of the children under 3 attend supervised open air play groups, which are not regarded as part of the day care services, (see Section 3 A-C).

Day care is also arranged on a private basis without official regulation or approval. The majority of children under 3 who are cared for by someone not a parent or a sibling, are in private, unregulated day care. This day care may be located in the child's home, or in the home of the child-minder, (see Section 3 D).

2.5.2 Forms of day care provided for children aged 3 - 6 years

For children aged 3 - 6 years the same forms of day care are available as for the 0 - 3 years olds, see above. Public day care arranged in private homes is less common for this age group.

Many local authorities offer a pre-school programme on a part-time basis to the 6-year-olds, usually supervised by a pre-school teacher. (These activities are included with other forms of day-care in the statistics).

In addition, for a considerable proportion of children aged 0 - 6 years whose parents are both employed no use of day care outside the family is reported. Some of the parents (usually the mothers) take the children to work with them. Some report "parent shifts", i.e. mother and father go out to work at different hours. A substantial number of working mothers - but not fathers - work reduced hours. Whether this is motivated by child-care demands we do not know (3).

The possibility that children are left without care for some part of the day can be neither confirmed nor ruled out on the basis of existing data.

2.6 Number of children in each form of day care listed above

The annual registration of day-care services gives data on public and approved day care only. In the following Tables 2 and 3 a survey is given of the number of children in public and approved day care (centre and family care), and the percentage of children aged 0 - 6 in such day care.

Table 2 Number of children in public day care and private, approved day care by age at the end of 1984.

	Years					
Total	0-2	3	4	5	6	7 and over
94,443	10,008	13,751	19,015	22,897	27,932	840

Table 3 Children in public and private, approved day care as a percentage of all children in the age group. 1984

	Years						
0-6	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
26.4	1.5	6.4	11.8	26.9	37.0	44.1	52.6

For very young children there are relatively few places available in public and private, approved day care. Less than 5% of the children aged 0 - 1 years and 12% of 2-year olds have this opportunity. For older children provision is relatively better.

Approximately 1/3 of the 3 to 4-year-olds, and close to half of the 5 to 6-year-olds are in day care (6). Of all children aged 0 - 6, 78% had no access to public or private, approved day care in 1986.

Survey data from 1980/81 give an indication of the use of public and private day care in families with pre-school children. This is shown in Table 4.

Table 4 Forms of day care used by families with pre-school children, by age of youngest child. Per cent.

	Age of youngest child	
Forms of day care	0 - 2	3 - 6
(1) No use of day care outside family	64	48
(2) Private unregulated day care	17	17
(3) Public and private, approved day care	15	27
(2 + 3)	5	7
Total	100	99
N	304	45

Source: Opdahl 1984 (4)

2.7 Estimate of the number of children in unregulated day care

Estimates from a survey made in 1980 indicate that about 120,000 children aged 0 - 10 were in unregulated day care. In this survey the relative importance of different forms of private child-minders was as shown in Table 5.

Table 5 Forms of day-care in use by children aged 0 - 10, from two-parent families. Per cent.

Forms of day-care	Families with married parents and children aged 0 - 10. Per cent.
Public or private approved	21
Housekeeper/nanny/au pair girl	2
Grand-parents	7
Other relatives	1
Friends, neighbours	2
Child-minder	7
Siblings	1
Other	2

Number of persons responding 870. Several forms could be listed per family.
Source: Opdahl 1984 (4).

The use of private day care is most commonly found among working parents. In dual-income families, where both parents worked full time 26% reported that public or private approved day care was used, whereas 45% used private unregulated day care (some used two or more forms of day care).

3. Forms of Day Care

The description of forms of day care given here will focus upon the institutional structure, which means that 4 different forms will be presented:[1]

A. Public day care in centres
B. Public day care in private homes (family day care)
C. Private day care controlled and approved by public authorities and supported economically by public means
D. Private, unregulated day care.

As will be seen, the private-public distinction does not quite overlap with the collective-individual distinction. Public day care and private, approved day care are most often organized as collective day care in centres; private unregulated day care is usually individual, arranged in private homes.

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1) In national statistics data on children in public day care, in public family day care, and private day care under public control are given together. For many of the questions in Section 3 answers relating to each individual form cannot be given separately.

3 A. Public Day Care in Centres

3.1 Provision, management, organization

Public (municipal) day care (i.e. day-care services owned and operated by local authorities) takes several forms: full-time and part-time, stationary and ambulatory services, with the age range of children attending varying considerably between municipalities. The decentralization of planning, establishing and running day care is a central feature of Norwegian child-care policies. Local socio-cultural and economic conditions have contributed to a broad range of day-care services, but also to considerable differences between regions and municipalities with regard to the number of places and type of day-care facilities.

Stationary public day care may be offered in institutions built especially for the purpose, or in an elementary school, in a converted house and so on. New structures and old ones have to meet certain standards, set by central government (see 1.3). The costs of running the services are split between the state, the municipality and the parents, as described in 1.4.

A special committee is appointed by every Municipal council, to plan and oversee local day-care facilities. Each institution has a board of directors where the owners (the municipality), the parents, and the employees are represented. The day-to-day management is the responsibility of the director. Privately owned day care institutions operating with public approval have to meet the same standard requirements concerning premises and staff as the public ones.

3.2 Age of children and hours of attendance

The age of children attending public day-care centres varies from 0 - 7 years in some municipalities, and 1 1/2 - 7, or 3 - 7 years in others. Generally the age group 3 - 6 has a far better supply of day care than the younger children.

The majority of children in public and private, approved day care stay less than a full week, 29% have 6 - 15 hours of attendance. 28% of the children attend from 16 - 30 hours per week, and 43% have 31 hours per week or more in 1984. This means that of all children aged 0 - 6, 11,4% were in public and private, approved day care for 31 hours or more per week, 15% for less than 30 hours, and 73.6% had no access to public or private, approved day care at all in 1984.

The youngest children, aged 0 - 2, generally attend day care for more days and longer hours than older children, as shown in Table 6.

Table 6 Children by number of hours spent in day care per week and age. 1984[1]

		Hours per week				
Age	Total	6-15	16-30	31-40	41+	Children in day care per 100 children in age group
0-1	100	1	11	39	49	5.1
2-3	100	17	21	28	34	19.3
4-5	100	28	31	19	22	40.4
6 years and over	100	43	29	14	15	55.1

Source: SU 1, 1986.

1)Note that Table 6 refers to children in public and in private, approved day-care.

Some forms of public day care are open 2 days a week. In sparsely populated areas mobile pre-school teachers may be available for some days or weeks per month.

3.3 Staffing

In public day care each institution is headed by a director who is a qualified pre-school teacher, or has an equivalent education. (Pre-school teachers' training is given at teachers' training colleges, and takes three years. Directors often have supplementary training). The director is in charge of the day-to-day management, overall planning and work organization. The director has the formal contact with other public services, e.g. the social and educational authorities, and with the parents, and participates in the allocation of available places. In large day care institutions the heads of the various sections are also required to have a formal background as a pre-school teacher, or the equivalent.

In public and private, approved day care the following norms apply to the ratio of qualified staff to number of children: 1 pre-school teacher per 14-18 children over 3, and per 7 - 9 children under 3 when hours of attendance are more than 6 per day. Where the hours are shorter, a larger number of children may be admitted. It is recommended that there be no less than two adults per 14 - 18 children aged 3 - 6, and per 7 - 9 children under 3 years. Nationally the average number of adults to children is 1:4 in public day care and 1:6 in approved, private day care. Generally there is some in-service supervision given by qualified staff.

In public day care immigrant children will receive some training in their native tongue by an adult speaking their own language, provided that there are 4 children speaking the language. No educational training is required for these teachers only bi-lingual proficiency.

Day-care legislation regulates the size and equipment of day-care institutions. The area norms are differentiated according to the age of the children and hours of attendance. The number of children admitted is calculated according to the following area norms:

Hours of attendance per day	Age of child	Total area per child
More than 6 hours	Under 3	10.4 - 13.5 m^2
More than 6 hours	Over 3	7 - 9 m^2
From 4 - 6 hours	Under 3	7 - 9 m^2
From 4 - 6 hours	Over 3	5.5 - 6.5 m^2
4 hours or less	All ages	4.5 - 5.5 m^2

The total outdoor area ought to be six times the size of the localities. At least half of this ought be suitable for play, according to the regulations.

3.4 Size of groups

The sizes of the institutions and the size of groups within the institutions vary. For the staff to child ratio in full time public day care see 3.3.

3.5 Parental involvement

It is explicitly stated in the Act governing Day Care that public and private, approved day care should be organized in close cooperation with the children's homes. Formal cooperation is organized through the board of directors and the parents' council (7). The board of directors consists of representatives from the parents, the employees and the owners. The authority of the board is limited to the internal structure and function of the institution. The parents' council comprises all parents whose children attend the institution. This is an advisory body, which can discuss and give advice on all questions relevant to the children and the parents.

Parents are entitled to individual conferences with the staff.Contact meetings between parents and staff are arranged at least twice a year. The parents' council meets on its own. In ordinary institutions there are no special arrangements apart from the above involving parents (employed or unemployed) in the care of the children.

3.6 Range of activities

Public day care offers pre-school education in the broadest sense,and opportunities for play, and social interaction between children and between children and adults. Day-care activities are aimed at stimulating each child to develop according to her/his abilities. In day care educational and caring aspects are both very important.

Children with special needs receive special treatment, e.g. from specially trained teachers, or contact with the educational counselling service which is part of the educational authority. There is also close cooperation with local health and social services.

3.7 Educational concerns, etc.

Children in public and private, approved day care are offered an environment and activities planned according to educational principles. For the 6 year olds many municipalities offer some training for life at school. Public day care services cooperate closely with the local educational counselling service.

3.8 Access

Children with handicaps of various kinds are given priority in access to public day care, according to the Act. Approximately 28% of all children aged 0 - 6 years have access to public or private, approved day care. There are considerable regional differences in access to day care, ranging from 0 - 60/70%. The differences in access to day care for children of different age groups are noted earlier, see Table 3.

Priority in access may be given to children from single-parent families and to children from dual earner families. Nationally children from such forms of families do not appear to be over-represented (1981 figures).

Locally a statistical over- or underrepresentation of certain types of families may depend on the criteria for admission, and to differences in demand for day care between different types of families. Socio-cultural differences resulting in different degrees of preference and demand for public day care are to be expected.

3.9 Merits and disadvantages

Public day care is generally considered to be of a high standard, and as a valuable experience for children. The scarcity of high-quality day care is the main problem. Many municipalities are unable to meet the demand for places especially for the youngest children. For many employed parents the lack of full-time places creates problems. The level of parental payment may also be too high for some families.

3.10 Economy

The costs of running public day-care centres are divided between the state, the municipality, and the parents. The cost per place depends on size and scope of the day care in question, opening hours and so on. Municipal expenditure on day care, and the average cost per child vary considerably. Parental payment per child is shown in Table 7.

Table 7 Children in public and private, approved day care by monthly fee paid by parents. Per cent. 1984.

		Payment NOK					
	Total	Free place	1-399	400-799	800-1199	1200 and over	Number of children
All children 0 - 6	100	8	37	25	25	5	94,443

Monthly payments vary with the length of attendance. 90% of the children attending less than 16 hours per week pay less than NOK 400 per month, 65% of the children staying for 31 hours or more per week pay NOK 800 or more. The local authority decides how much the parents should pay, and there are no fixed limits.

In 1983 state subsidies for public and private, approved day care amounted to about NOK 550 million. Altogether the local authorities paid about NOK 800 million. The average public expenditure per child in day care was NOK 15,000 per year (14).

3 B. Private, Officially Approved Day Care in Centres.

3.1 Provision, management and operation

Official involvement in day care covers different forms of care and different types of obligations. Private, approved day care may be organized by employers, parents, religious communities and others. see Table 1. When day care is organized collectively, that is for several children at a time, the services have to meet certain standards. When these standards are met, economic support from the state will be given. The municipality may (and often does) set conditions for providing economic support. Municipalities commonly demand the right to control the allocation of places as a condition for maximum economic support. Where this condition is not accepted, the owner and/or the users will have to pay more.

Private, approved day-care institutions have a director in charge of the day-to-day administration, with an educational background and tasks similar to those described for public day care.

3.2 Children

The age range of children varies from institution to institution. On a national basis children aged 0 - 6 years are included in this form of day care. Daily and weekly periods of attendance vary from full-time to part-time.

3.3 Staffing see 3.3.A.

3.4 Size of unit, etc. see 3.4.A.

Private day-care institutions are often smaller in size, and contain fewer children than the public ones. In order to be approved, privately owned day-care facilities have to meet the same requirements as public ones. For personnel and area norms, see 3.3.A.

3.5 Parental involvement

In some of the private approved day care services, especially in those organized by parents' cooperatives parents take a more active part, e.g. in financing the activities, in maintenance and equipment, and in replacing personnel in cases of illness. In some places parents may work as volunteers.

3.6 Range of activities, see 3.6.A

3.7 Educational concerns etc. see 3.7.A.

3.8 Access

This depends on the agreement with the municipality. For some private, approved day-care services the intake of children is part of a coordinated municipal intake. Where the owners or users have reserved the right to allocate places, special groups of children may have priority of access. Day care provided by parents' cooperatives will reserve places for their own children, employers providing services will reserve places for employees. With limited or no municipal subsidies the level of parental payment may be so high as to exclude certain groups of families and children.

3.9 Merits and disadvantages

Private initiatives have been very important in the development of "modern" day care in post-World War II Norwegian society. The state and local government now play a larger role in the provision of day care, but private interests are still important. As long as public approval of standards and qualifications is required, and public subsidies are given, private day care is partly integrated into the public services, and are perceived as supplementing these services.

If a widespread system of private, approved day care were to be reserved for children from well-to-do families, this would contrast markedly with the generally held idea, that all children are to have equal access to high-quality day care.

A closer parent-staff cooperation is sometimes mentioned as an advantage in some forms of private, approved day care. (See also 3.9.A).

3.10 Finances see 3.10.A.

3.11 Innovations etc.

Whether private interests should be more actively involved in the provision of day care in order to increase the number of places more rapidly, is presently being debated. For general information see 5.2.

3 C. Subsidized Family Day Care

3.1 Provision, management, organization

Public day care in private homes, or family day care is organized by the local authority as part of the local public system of day care. Such day care may also be provided by private interests, operating with public approval. Children in family day care represent 2.7% of all children in public and private, approved day care. Altogether 800 homes are engaged in this form of child care, with an average of 3 children per home.

Family day care may be organized in two ways, either in connection with an existing day-care establishment, or as a separate day-care unit. There is one family day-care director per 3o children. The director, who is a qualified pre-school teacher, is responsible for the planning of activities and supervision of the family day-care providers.

3.2 Age of children, length of stay

Family day care is particularly intended for young children aged 0 - 3, for whom the supply of places in public day-care institutions is very limited (see Table 2).

3.3 Staffing

Employment in family day care does not require any formal training. One member of the family offering to give family day care, generally a woman, is employed as the minder. Her terms of employment correspond to those of employees in public day-care centres. It is assumed that the whole family agrees with the activity going on in the home. Supervision is given by a qualified pre-school teacher. Some municipalities offer courses.

3.4 Size of unit, etc.

Family day care takes place in a private home. (30 children make up one family day care unit). Each group may not include more than 4 children of pre-school age, including those of the minder. Family day care is generally provided on a full-time basis, up to 45 hours per week.

3.5 Parental involvement

The same rules apply for public family day care as for day care in centres, see 3.5.A.

3.6 Activities

Children and adults in family day care have a common base, either in an ordinary day-care institution or in the director's office. They may visit the premises a fixed number of days per month. Special excursions will sometimes be arranged. The activities in family day care are planned by the pre-school teacher in cooperation with the child-minders.

3.7 Educational concerns

The same overall concerns as for public day care in centres, see 3.7.A.

3.8 Access

Given the shortage of public day care for children under 3, the parents who gain access to any form of public day care for such young children generally have top priority. In most municipalities family day care is reserved for the under 3s, but a child who has started in family day care may continue there until older.

3.9 Merits and disadvantages

When family day care was introduced it was perceived as an easy way of mobilizing day-care resources, at a reasonable cost, since the local authorities would not have to pay for the establishment of new institutions. It was assumed that this form of day care, regulated by public authorities, would replace the informal unregulated arrangements. So far, public family day care has not been developed to an extent where this objective could be realized.

For very young children and for children who needed smaller groups it was argued that day care in a private home might be preferable to institutional care. Generally family day care is conceived as better suited for younger than for older children, for whom a broader range of activities, a more pronounced educational structure and a larger selection of playmates are commonly thought to be more suitable.

Parents may also prefer family day care because it may be located closer to the home, and also because it is full time, whereas day care in centres is more often provided on a part-time basis only.

The keeping up of a stable work force of persons employed in family day care has proved difficult.

3.10 Costs

Family day care is financed by the state, the municipality and the parents like the rest of the public day care services, see 3.10.A. State subsidies for centre care and family day care are the same. Parental payment follows the local guidelines for other forms of day care. Costs per place varies between the municipalities, as does the level of parental payment.

3.11 Changes

The Ministry is working on guidelines on family day care. A reduction of the number of children per pre-school teacher has been proposed.

3 D. Private, Unregulated Day Care

3.1 Provision, management, operation

Private, unregulated day care may be individual or collective, but rarely comprises more than 6 - 8 children. Collective day care has to be registered for control and approval. This is not always done. For individual, private day-care arrangements no registration is required. Demands for legislation in this field have not been met.

Private child-minding is partly based on the family's social network resources, and includes friends, relatives, neighbours. In addition there exists an informal, "shadow" market for day-care services. No system of registration or regulation exists for these forms of day-care. Private day-care arrangements may be collective, caring for a number of children, or individual. The day-care personnel may be paid, but unpaid caring for children is also common, according to survey responses. Private day care is also organized between mothers on an unpaid exchange basis (3).

Unregulated day care may be organized in the child's home or in the home of the minder. Day care in the child's home is often done by an employed person - most often a women, a nanny, a housekeeper, an au pair girl. When day care is organized in the minder's home, this person, most often a woman, is regarded as self employed.

The content and quality of private, unregulated day care varies considerably. The arrangements are most often made individually, as an agreement between the minder and the parents, sometimes formally but often informally.

3.2 Children

Children aged 0 - 6 years use private day care. As the public and private, approved day care is more available for the older age groups of pre-school children, the use of private day-care is more common among the younger. The length of stay varies, and we have no specific figures on this.

3.3 Personnel

No formal qualifications are required for private child-minding. The demands that parents can make depend upon the local day-care situation. Usually the private child-minders are women with relatively young children of their own. Local recruitment and recruitment based on friendship and kinship is common, and a certain homogeneity in social status between mothers and minders might therefore be expected. On the other hand, the labour market participation - and corresponding need for day care - increases with increasing level of education among the mothers which indicates social heterogeneity. Altogether private child-minders are recruited from a relatively wide range of social backgrounds. A large proportion of personnel with formal qualifications in child-care and education is not, however, to be expected. Where day care is provided by persons closely related to the parents the formal qualification is probably not so important, or not the most important criterion.

3.4 Child/adult ratio

Private day care commonly includes 1 - 2 children per adult or up to 3 - 4 when the child-minder's children are included. More than 6 - 8 children per minder seems to be fairly unusual.

3.5 Parental involvement

If private day care is provided in the child's home, the day care is often defined, structured, and organized by the parents. Some parents and minders agree to certain specifications concerning the structure and content of day care. In some cases the organization will be left to the minder.

3.6 Range of activities

This depends upon the agreement between parents and minder. Activities are often limited to the ordinary routines of the minder and her family. Play group participation may be included where such facilities exist. Sometimes private day care is organized as a supplement to public day care, for example, where public day care covers a limited number of hours per day and week.

3.7 Educational concerns, etc. No data.

3.8 Access

When paid for, full-time private day care is generally the most expensive form of day care. It is generally assumed that only high income families can afford it. If, however, the reports from several surveys are correct, and a considerable proportion of private day care is not paid in money, that is - in economic terms - a favourable arrangement for the parents. (See also 3.3.D).

3.9 Merits and disadvantages

Among the merits of this form of day care is the greater flexibility it offers to parents - and minders - as regards hours of work and attendance payment, catering for special needs. For the private, network-based day care the close personal ties between minder and family are often seen as important. Often the care given in a home is considered as more "family-like", than the care given in institutions, and therefore preferable, especially for very young children (compare also the family day-care services offered by local authorities). The disadvantages mentioned by parents are the lack of quality control, uncertainty about the care provided, and lack of information about routines. Cases of ill-treatment have been reported.

For the minder the lack of training for the job and of secure employment conditions are often given as disadvantages, whereas the opportunity to stay at home while the children are small and still have a modest income of one's own are given as the advantages.

Experts and parents are worried that the existence of a considerable shadow labour market in child-care will reduce the efforts of central and local government to provide public day care.

3.10 Costs

When private, unregulated day care is paid reports indicate that the parental costs are relatively high compared to public and private, approved day-care.

3.11 Innovations

No attempts to regulate these forms of day care are envisaged.

4. Access to Day Care

4.1 Which parents and children have access?

The supply of public and private approved day care varies considerably between regions and municipalities. The chances of admission to such day care therefore vary according to the children's residence. Chances of admission also vary according to the age of the child, since public and private, approved day care are better developed for the age groups 3 - 6 than for children under 3.

Nowhere does the supply of public and private, approved day care meet the demand. The distribution of places is administered locally, according to criteria decided on by local authorities. Priority may be given to children of single parents, children from families with social, economic or health problems, children from low-income, dual-earner families, children who need safe places to play.

The shortage of places means that even children with high priority do not always gain access. The only children whose right to public day care is ensured by legislation are children with handicaps, provided that they will benefit from the day care offered.

Data on the distribution and use of day care are scarce. From the records of public and private, approved day care in 1981 children from single parent families and from dual-earner families formed the largest groups, which is not surprising given the usual admission criteria. None of these groups of children appeared to be overrepresented in relation to the proportion of all pre-school children that they represent. Since some employers, like hospitals, establish day care for their personnel, an overrepresentation of health workers' children might be expected.

One study from Oslo, the capital, and largest city indicates that children whose mothers have 15 years or more of schooling are overrepresented in public and private, approved day care (1). This may be explained by a higher level of economic activity among this group of mothers, and a stronger demand for day care. Socio-cultural interpretations of motherhood differ, as do the attitudes to institutional day care which means that the demand for public and private, approved day care may vary considerably between families with different socio-economic and socio-cultural backgrounds.

4.2 Assessment of need for day care

In day-care legislation each of the 454 municipalities are instructed to make a 4 year programme for the development of day care in their area, with the aim of satisfying the local need for day care (see 1.2). In a report to Parliament in 1981 the Ministry estimated on the basis of the municipal plans that day care was needed for about 60% of all pre-school children (13). Few municipalities have reached this level of coverage by public and private, approved day care. As a larger proportion of mothers go out to work and as collective day care becomes more common and more universally accepted as the norm for "good child-care", the demand for public day care may exceed 60%.

4.3 Information

The Ministry has developed various types of information, written and visual, aimed at parents and the rest of the general public. Pamphlets on public day care have been distributed to public offices,to mother and child clinics, and to the day-care institutions all over the country. Videotapes and films have been prepared on different types of day care facilities and about various pilot projects and experiments.

Many municipalities and day care centres have prepared special information about the local day care facilities. Some distribute this free to all families with pre-school children. Families may obtain information about public and private, approved day care by contacting existing day-care institutions or the local authority. Parents' associations and professional associations inform about day care, e.g. in local "day-care weeks" where many aspects of day care activities are presented to the public.

In the present situation, where the shortage of public and private, approved day care is the dominant feature there are few or no public campaigns aimed at increased application.

4.4 Geographical distribution

In the 19 counties the proportion of children aged 0 - 6 years who use public and approved day-care varied from 18.8% to 49.4% in 1984. In the municipalities the proportion of children in public and approved day-care varied from 0% to 70%. There are also notable local differences within the municipalities, with some areas better off than others.

Some of the larger cities, in particular Oslo have a higher proportion of children in public and private, approved day care than other municipalities. When municipalities are classified according to the dominant industries, what is called the "central service municipalities" have the highest proportion of children in public and approved day care, 35.7%. The municipalities classified as based on "primary industry" come second with a coverage of 26.6% of the pre-school children.

Public and approved day care has been developed in response to cultural and ethnic needs, e.g. in the Sami districts in Northern Norway, and also among families of Sami origin in Oslo. There is a special day-care service for gypsy families. Interim day care is developed for refugee and immigrant families. The system of native language teachers employed for foreign children is a response to the language problems created when children from different nationalities enter Norwegian day-care centres. In sparsely populated areas mobile pre-school teachers are sometimes used.

For children with severe handicaps special day care services are set up.

4.5 Coordination

The local committee appointed by the Municipal Council is in charge of coordinating day care services locally.

4.6 Equitable access

The shortage of day care and the great demand has actualized questions concerning distributive justice. Even children with high priority will in many cases not gain access (see 4.1). Day care legislation states that children with handicaps shall have priority in admission to public day care. Otherwise the admission criteria are decided locally. The decentralized approach to day care has lead to considerable regional differences in the supply of day care. This, and the general shortage of day-care services means that equitable access for all pre-school children in the country cannot be ensured.

5. General Issues

5.1 Merits and disadvantages

The provision of public and private, approved day care is generally considered to be of high quality. Yet there are notable differences between the forms of care offered, and also notable differences between the institutions that are classified under the same category of day care. See 3.9. A-D.

Since a large proportion of public and approved day-care centres stay open less than normal working hours, opening hours create problems for the parents in employment. Increasing parental payment is another issue of concern.

Large-scale experience of collective public day care dates back less than ten years. The debate on the institutionalization of childhood will probably grow stronger in the coming years.

5.2 Innovation

Research on day care, experiments and pilot projects are supported mainly by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs and Government Administration Educational experiments and national and foreign educational programmes are being tried out.

There are pilot projects dealing with special age groups, children with handicaps, and children from minority groups. Research and development is also being done on the organization and functions of day care.

Social integration of 4 to 9 years old has been tried out successfully in some municipalities, and has been recently terminated.

A pilot project coordinating day care with school is started this year, and special educational programmes are being offered to 6-years olds in some municipalities.

For some years the integration of children with physical, mental, social or other handicaps in ordinary day care has been tried out, and a national study of the experiences has recently been terminated.

There is a good deal of interest in the development of planning routines in day care and a number of projects are in train. Cooperation between day-care staff and parents is another field of interest.

Projects have been done focussing upon the active use of the community as an educational resource in day care activities.

Recently a study was finished which dealt with the changes in day care structure, and the development of unregulated day care.

For information on day care services developed in response to cultural and ethnic needs see 4.4.

5.3 Cost-benefit studies

Traditional cost-benefit studies have not been undertaken in relation to the different forms of day care.

Some municipalities have made cost-benefit analyses of public day-care in order to show the economic gains or losses of municipal investment in day-care. In a recent analysis made in Oslo, the costs of each place was compared with the assumed income tax gain derived from employed mothers on an average woman's wage. This analysis showed a net economic gain for the municipality for day care provided for the age group 3 - 6. For the younger children (where standard requirements are higher) the analysis pointed to a net loss i.e. income from the taxation of mothers did not equal the cost of day care supply (11).

5.4 Comparative studies

No comparative studies have been made in which two or more forms of child-care are directly compared.

Summary

The main elements of the structure of day care in Norway are family-based care, public day care, private, approved day care and private, unregulated day care. It is still common for children of pre-school age, i.e. 0 - 6, to be cared for at home, by mothers and sometimes fathers and siblings. About half of the families with pre-school children report that no day care outside the family is used (1980). The remaining families either have access to public or private, approved day care, or they make arrangements for private, unregulated child-minding.

The provision of public day care forms part of the general family policy. Issues concerning day care are under the administration of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs and Government Administration, which is responsible for the general supervision of day care. Day care that meets certain specified standards of quality is subsidized by the state. Regionally the county governor has the authority to approve day care. Locally the municipalities are charged with the planning and supervision of day care, and are encouraged to develop day-care services in response to local needs.

In 1986 100,000 children, corresponding to 28% of the children under school age, were admitted to public day care or to privately owned day care, which was approved and subsidized by public authorities. This level of coverage is very modest compared to the rest of Europe, and in particular when compared to the neighbouring countries Denmark and Sweden, where comprehensive public day care services were developed earlier.

In Norway "mass provision" and "mass consumption" of public day care has only developed over the last decade, with demand constantly exceeding supply. When special day care legislation was introduced in 1975 only 7% of the children aged 0 - 6 were admitted to public or private, approved day care. The slow development of the provision of public day care in Norway has been explained by the relatively late industrialization and urbanization, and by the late increase in labour market participation of mothers. It has also been explained by socio-cultural traditions that leave the responsibility for early socialization to the family.

Norwegian approach to day care is characterized by decentralization and by a mixture of public and private interests. Basic to day care policy is that public day care services should be planned in a local context, in response to local needs, but on condition that standards of quality requirements, decided centrally, are met. This approach has probably increased the local support for public day care. In a national perspective the supply of public day care is heterogeneous and generally of high quality.

Planning of day care is a municipal responsibility. There is, so far, no obligation to implement the plans. The problem of decentralized provision is shown in the gap between demand and supply. It has proved difficult to fulfil national aims for day care services by decentralization of responsibility. Decentralization has also lead to considerable regional differences in day care coverage, and in the coverage for children of different age groups. Less than 10% of the children aged 0 - 2 have access to public or approved day care, while 55% of the 6 year olds have access.

The development of public and private, approved day care has not been sufficient to meet the demand. The general shortage of public day care facilities forms the background for the important role played by private, unregulated day care.

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PART IV

DAY CARE IN SWEDEN

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1. Policy and Objectives

1.1. Purpose of day-care provision

Day care for pre-school children is one aspect of the general Swedish welfare policy, more specifically of a comprehensive "barnomsorgspolitik". "Barnomsorg" which can be roughly translated as "child care", refers to a series of services, mainly provided by local authorities, for children aged 0 - 12 years and their parents.

The provision of day care, and the quantity and quality of day care services have been the subject of much debate in Sweden. "Barnstugeutredningen" (the Royal Commission on Child-Care) was appointed in 1968 to investigate the form and quality of day-care facilities and to propose reforms. The aims of day care were formulated in "Förskollagen" (Act governing Pre-school Education) of 1975 and in "Barnomsorgslagen" (Act governing Child Care) of 1977. Since 1982 the provision of day care has been regulated by Socialtjänstlagen (Social Services Act,)in particular Sections 12 - 18.

The general aim of this Act as formulated in Section 1 is the promotion of democratic values such as equality, security and responsibility (2). In addition the purpose of public day-care provision is to cooperate with the children's homes in establishing a stimulating and secure environment for their upbringing and development. Moreover, public day-care services are conceived of as fulfilling several functions, depending on the family's situation. It is meant to enable parents to combine parenthood with outside employment or studying. For children with handicaps and for children with special needs public day care is regarded as a preventive measure and these groups of children are given priority of access. For immigrant children public day-care represents not only an introduction to Swedish culture but also an early education in the children's mother tongue and contact with their native culture. Section 18 of the Act states that hospitalized or otherwise institutionalized children are to be given the opportunity to take part in activities corresponding to those offered in day care.

The educational aims of day care as formulated by Barnstugeutredningen are, to stimulate favourable physical and social development in children in "a democrative perspective". Working, playing and learning are catchwords for pre-school education and socialization (17).

The present government aims to introduce legislation by 1991 that will entitle all children, including those with parents at home, those in family day care and those living in sparsely populated areas to participate in the educational and social services provided by the public day-care system.

In 1985 Riksdagen (the Swedish Parliament) adopted a Cabinet proposal called "Förskola för alla barn" (Day Care for All Children) to make day-care services available to all children aged one and a half to six years by 1991 at the latest. The proposals specifies that different forms of day care are to be provided, and that access is to be differentiated according to the parents' situation:

- The children of employed parents and of students will be accommodated in full-time day care in centres, cooperatives or family day care from the age of 18 months, if the parents so wish.

- Children in family day care and children whose parents are at home are to be entitled to a place in part-time day-care centres from the age of 4.

- For children under 4 places are to be offered in "öppen förskola", that is "open pre-school" for children accompanied by an adult (see Section 3B below).

The proposal aims at a considerable increase in the number of day-care places and also at improving the quality of the services offered. The National Board of Health and Welfare was instructed to prepare an educational programme that would provide a common national framework for day-care activities and to follow closely the development of day care services within the municipalities (5,6,7,8).

Within this centralized framework a strong element of decentralization was to be perpetuated in Swedish day care (see 1.2 1.3). Each of the 284 local authorities was instructed to plan for the development of day care within its district, and to decide on which forms of care to provide, the size of children's groups, area norms, child/staff ratio, etc. Day-care staff were to have considerable responsibility for carrying out the educational programmes and in running the services. Parents were to be involved in the planning and running of day care (10,14).

1.2. Provision and management

On a national basis day-care services lie within the province of the Ministry of Social Affairs, which is responsible for the preparation of laws and proposals related to day care. The National Board of Health and Welfare supervises the development of day-care facilities and administers the government grants to municipal day-care. The Board publishes educational programmes and plans for organization of the work in day care, prepares educational material for staff, and informs about recent developments in day-care research.

The planning and provision of local day care is the responsibility of the local authority and is dealt with by the local social welfare committee (appointed by the municipal council) and the local social administration. In some districts educational consultants are employed to advise on educational matters, arrange for staff training and so on, but in most places, the administrators in charge of day care also deal with educational issues.

Day-care services are almost exclusively organized by the local authorities. Less than 2% are provided by others (21). A small number of day-care centres for the children of hospital staff are run by the counties and a few private day-care centres are organized by parents' cooperatives, approximately 150, or by religious organizations.

Each day-care institution has a director, who is in charge of management and educational planning. Usually there is no Board of Directors, and the director reports directly to the local social administration.

1.3. Regulations

As outlined in 1.1., national day care is regulated by law, and supervised centrally by the National Board of Health and Welfare. Locally the social welfare committee and the social administration supervise the institutions. Section 17 of the Social Services Act states that each municipality must have a plan for the provision of day care adopted by the municipal council, for at least five years ahead.

The Social Services Act provides a framework legislation for day-care services, and leaves to the local authorities to decide on the forms and standards of day care. The Ministry of Social Affairs does not issue mandates regulating the development of day-care services, only broadly formulated recommendations and guidelines.

Supervision is largely linked with government subsidies of day care. Information is gathered in connection with the annual reports from the local authorities, the annual day-care statistics and individual questions raised by local authorities (11,12) The National Board of Health and Welfare may visit municipalities for the exchange of information, but this does not happen very often.

Unregulated day care

According to a national survey of child care in 1980/83, 20% of pre-school children were in unregulated private day-care arrangements. The parents of 4% of the children reported that they were minding children from other families (19). The same survey demonstrated a considerable unmet demand for local public day care. (For more information, see 2.7) A national survey of child care in 1986 reported that private child-minding arrangements were being used for 11% of children aged 0-6 years (22). Since some of the private arrangements for day care are made between close relations and are also reported to be unpaid, one may hypothesize that the expansion of the public services will not necessarily render the private ones superfluous.

1.4. Funding of day care

The provision of day care is the responsibility of the local authority. Central government does not ordinarily subsidize the establishment of new facilities. In 1986 a special one-year government grant of SOK 100 million was instituted to encourage the establishement of day-care and recreation centres (14). The running costs of day care are divided between the local authority, central government and the parents. Government subsidies were changed as of 1 January 1986, and are now given as a contribution per child admitted, whereas previously they were per place (15). The conditions for receiving a government subsidy are that the day-care service is a part of the municipal plan, and that the care provided is offered on a regular basis, not occasional, and is non-profit-making. As long as these requirements are met all forms of day care, private and public, receive government subsidies (14).

Government subsidy of the running costs varies according to the form of the day care. Subsidies are given per child, and according to hours of attendance. Additional support is given to children in need of special care and to children receiving language training in their mother tongue (other than Swedish). Day care and recreational centres, part-time day care, and "open pre-school" also receive state grants calculated on the basis of the ratio of staff working hours to the number of children attending (14). For an evaluation of the government grants to day care, see (1). In 1986 government subsidies were as follows (in SOK):

Day care in centres		
(per child) full time	22.000	a year
part time	12.500	"
Family day care		
(per child) full time	16.500	"
part time	7.500	"
Special support (an additional sum per 10th child)	7.500	"
Language training (provided that specific conditions are met)	3.375	"
Staff (per staffmember working with children) in day-care and recreational centres, part-time groups, open pre-school	30.000	"

Source: Barnomsorgen i Sverige, 1985-86, p. 10 (14).

The remaining costs in public day care are defrayed by the local authority and the parents. The local authority may give financial support to private day-care centres, but when it does not, the remaining costs are covered by the parents and/or the owners.

Parental fees must not exceed the cost to the local authority of each place after the government grant has been deducted.

Tax relief is not given to providers of care, or to parents.

The gross costs per child in different forms of day care in 1984 are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Costs per child in different forms of day care in 1984, in SOK.

	Gross costs to the local authority	Income*	Net costs to the local authority
Day care in centres, full time	49.925	29.100	20.825
Part-time day care	11.925		
Recreational centre	33.800	14.300	19.500
Family day care: full time	45.125	21.450	23.685
Family day care: part time	26.950	12.850	14.100

Source: Barnomsorgen i Sverige p.9. (14).

* Government subsidies and parental fees.

1.5. Parental payment

The amount and form of parental payment are decided locally. A few local authorities have adopted the principle of equal payment for all children. Usually the fees are differentiated according to the annual income of the parents, and the number of children from one family attending public care. The fees also vary according to hours of attendance. Recent surveys show considerable differences between the municipalities in the fees charged for day-care services of the same type, e.g. full time care at a centre (36).

In almost all municipalities free places may be granted to low income families. On average parental fees represent approximately 10% of day-care costs, which means that the proportion of costs covered by parents is relatively smaller than in Denmark and Norway.

1.6. Major national issues

During the 1970s day care for children aged 0-12 years expanded rapidly, and became the largest of the sectors under the responsibility of the local social welfare committees (13). The above mentioned (1.1) government goal of providing day care services for all children aged 18 months to 6 years by 1991 will necessitate a great increase in the number of day-care facilities. The provision of day-care services is to remain the responsibility of the local authorities. The national plans for extending day care thus call for an intensification of the efforts of local authorities in this area. Motivating the local authorities to increase their investment in day care is obviously a central issue. Whether it is possible to realize this most ambitious goal by 1991 remains to be seen. The government is considering legislation that will make day-care provision mandatory for the local authorities.

When all children aged 18 months to 6 years have been accommodated the problem remains of how to care for the under 18 month-olds whose parents are in training or in employment.

The ongoing changes in family structure and in society, shown most clearly in the increased labour market participation of mothers, have greatly influenced the demand for day care, and necessitated a rethinking of day-care organization and content. In 1985 more than 80% of the mothers of pre-school children were part of the work force, a considerable minority of whom were working full time (see 2.2 - 2.3). This means an increasing demand for full-time day care and for new forms of cooperation between the parents and the day-care services. This process involves a continual reappraisement of the professional roles and the organization of work.

Improving the quality of day care services has been a concern of the Swedish government for many years. In the early 1980s the National Board of Health and Welfare introduced a comprehensive plan for the development of the educational aspects of day care ("Förskolans pedagogiska verksamhet - mål och inriktning", 1981). A committee of experts proposed an educational program for public day care, with the intention of establishing a common national framework as regards aims, contents, and methods for all day-care facilities.

In Sweden, as in the other Nordic countries day care is developed in a tradition that combines the dual tasks of educating and caring for the children. How to balance these different aspects is an issue of concern in the ongoing restructuring and reformation of the public day-care services.

The national plans for the extension of day-care services call for an increase in the number of students and an intensification of efforts to reduce early retirement or dropping out of qualified personnel and to re-recruit those who have done so (16). The changing conception of day care in Swedish society and the new demands being made on it also raise questions about development and innovation in the education of day-care staff (9).

A closer cooperation between day care and the formal school system during the first years of school is being tried out in several districts.

For many years considerable efforts have been made to improve the services for non-Swedish speaking children (4), and for children with special needs (18).

There has been much discussion in Sweden recently over the role and form of private initiative in day care. Parents' cooperatives have been subsidized and encouraged whereas economic support has not been granted to profit-making private day-care schemes.

There is a strong interest in promoting local innovation, development and experiments in day care (3). In 1984 and -85 SOK. 30 million per year was awarded as government grants in support of such activities. For 1986 the grant was 25 million. In 1984/85 more than 60% of the local authorities applied for government grants in this field (13). Local government grants towards such developmental work were also awarded in many municipalities.

2. Day Care for Pre-School Children

2.1. Number of children

At the end of 1985 there were approcimately 668,000 children aged 0 - 6 in Sweden. Of these 380,000 were aged 0 - 3 years and 290,000 were aged 4 - 6 years (37).

2.2 - 2.3. Mothers in employment

In 1985 more than 80% of the mothers of pre-school children were registered in employment. Of the mothers whose youngest child was under 3 in 1986, 118,000 were working part-time, and 82,000 full-time. Of the mothers whose youngest child was aged 3 - 6, 129,000 worked part-time and 75,000 full-time (37).

2.4. Single-parent families

Of the pre-school children 10% are living in single-parent families, and 9,5% of the children in this age group live in a single-parent family headed by a woman.

2.5. Forms of day care

2.5.1. - 2.5.2. Day care for different age groups

Subsidized day care for children under 3 is provided in a centre ("daghem") or in a family ("familjedaghem"). Children aged 3-6 can attend a centre, family day care or part-time groups, (20, 21). In Sweden the term "förskola" refers both to "daghem" which is full-time and "deltidsgrupp" which is part-time day care.

"Daghem" which refers to day care in centres, usually presupposing at least 7 hours of attendance per day, comprises several forms:

- toddlers' group - usually for children aged 0-2/3 years
- siblings' group, usually for children aged 2.5 years to school-age
- extended siblings' group, which may include children under 2.5 years and school children.
- age-segregated group, which includes only children of the same age. This form is now relatively rare.

The term "deltidsgrupp" refers to part-time day care, ordinarily 15 hours per week, which is mainly intended for children aged 5-6 years old.

The great majority of day-care centres, whether full time or part-time, are provided by the local authorities. Recently an increasing interest in day-care centres run by parent's cooperatives has been registered.

Subsidized family day care ("kommunal familjedaghem") is provided by the local authority who employs the persons providing the care according to existing collective agreement. (Family day care arranged on a private basis is not included in the annual registration figures, see 2.7).

In addition to traditional centre care and family day care, new forms of day-care arrangements are developing. The 3-parent-family arrangement implies that children from 3-4 families are cared for in one of the children's home (or in rotation between the different homes). The local authority supports the arrangement economically and may help to recruit a carer-person (childminder).

"Öppen förskola" - literally translated as "open pre-school" (or open day-care) is part-time day care intended for children aged 0-6, and for the adults who care for them, including parents, family day-care providers and child-minders. At the end of 1984 there were 689 open pre-schools in 201 municipalities. Many more were planned to open in 1985. No registration has been done so far of the number of children and parents participating (14).

Seasonal day-care provisions are organized in some areas, for example at harvest time ("skördedaghem"), or in connection with tree planting.

Sick children may be cared for at home by an ambulatory day-care provider ("barndagvårdare") employed by the local authority. Usually, however, parents make use of the parental leave they are entitled to when children are ill. The ambulatory day-care service may also be used to relieve parents whose children are handicapped, or otherwise in need of extra care (14). For hospitalized and institutionalized children see 1.1.

2.6. Number of children in the various forms of day care

At the end of 1984, 42% of the children aged 0-6 years had access to day-care centres or to family day care. Of these, 173,200 (26%) were in day care centres, and 108,800 (16%) were in family day care. A further 78,600 (15%) attended part-time day care (21). These are the main forms of extra-familial day care in Sweden. Altogether more than 40% of the pre-school children have access to the public day-care services. The use of "open pre-schools" is not registered. A rough estimate indicates that these have the capacity to serve about 35,000 children (34), which implies that 50 - 60% of the children aged 0-6 years have access to some form of day care, whether full-time or part-time. An overview of the forms of day care most commonly used is shown in Table 2. (For more detailed information on the use of different forms of day care based on data from 1986, see Table 6).

Table 2. Children in various forms of day care, absolute figures and percentage of each age group. 1984.

Forms of day care	Age of children 0-2 N	 3-6 N	 0-6 N	 %
Day care centre	95,558	77,658	173,200	26
Family day care	55,342	53,466	108,800	16
Part-time group		78,619	78,600	15

Source: (21)

2.7 Children in unregulated care

From 1986 the Central Bureau of Statistics will carry out annual surveys of the demand for day care, which may give more detailed information about the forms of day care actually in use, included the unregulated forms.

According to a survey from 1982/83 20% of the children aged 0-6 were in private unregulated forms of care, 5% were acommodated in private, unpaid arrangements, and 15% were cared for by a privately paid child-minder (19). In this survey the proportion of children in unregulated day care equalled the proportion of children in subsidized family day care organized by the local authority. As shown in this study, approximately 100.000 children were accomodated in unregulated forms of day care. In addition, 4% of the children were cared for at home by a parent who was minding children from other families either as part of a subsidized family day-care arrangemenmt or on a private basis.

A national survey of child care carried out in 1986 reported that 69,000 or 11% of pre-school children were cared for in private child-minding arrangements, 3% were in unpaid arrangements and 8% were cared for by a privately paid child-minder, see Table 6.

3. Forms of Day Care

3A Day-care centres ("Daghem")

3A.1. Provision and management

Ninety-eight percent of the day-care centres ("daghem") are run by the local authorities. Only 2% are run by parents' cooperatives or humanitarian organizations.

3A.2. Age of children - hours of attendance

Day-care centres cater for children aged 0-6 years. Some times day care and recreational centres are combined, and older school-age children also attend. About 80% of the children have at least 7 hours of attendance per day (which is full time). The centres are usually open for 10-12 hours per day.

3A.3. Staff

The director of the centre has the main responsibility for day-care activities. The staff directly involved with the children are pre-school teachers and nursery nurses. The extended sibling groups also employ staff who are specially trained to organize recreational activities ("fritidspedagoger"). Students work in the centres as part of their training. Conscientious objectors, young men aged 18-20 years, may work in a day-care centre instead of doing their military service.

Pre-school teachers and recreational teachers have two and a half years training at college level. Nursery nurses have a 2 year training at high school level.

In 1984, 47% of the staff in full-time day-care centres were pre-school teachers, 46% were nursery nurses, 3% had other forms of training and 3% were untrained. Of the staff directly involved with the children 6% were men (20).

The education of day-care personnel is at present being reorganized. According to the National Board of Health and Welfare, special efforts will have to be made during the 1980s to supplement and update the qualifications of day-care employees. In-service training is offered by the majority of local authorities.

3A.4. Size of units

The majority of day-care institutions consists of 1-4 children's groups. The size of the groups varies with the age of the children and the form of day care provided. Children aged 0 - 3 years are generally 10 - 12 in a group, whereas the group size for the 3 to 6-year-olds is 15 - 18. Mixed-aged groups of 0 - 6 year-olds have 15 - 18 children.

The staff/child ratio recommended by the National Board of Health and Welfare in full time care at a centre is:
- children aged 6 months to 3 years: 2 adults per 5 children
- children aged 3-6 years: 1 adult per 5 children

The registered staff/child ratio in full-time day-care centres for children aged 0-6 is 4.3 children per adult (14). Since this ratio is decided on locally, it varies somewhat from municipality to municipality.

3A.5. Parental involvement

Parents are encouraged to participate in day-care centres and are entitled to participation in the planning and carrying out of day-care activities. Normally the parents spend some time in the day-care centre during the child's introduction period. The centre may invite the parent to have a meal with the children. Individual parent-staff conferences are arranged 4 times a year, and parents' meetings are organized. Moreover there are daily contacts when the child is fetched and delivered. In Sweden parents are entitled to 2 days paid leave of absence from their work per child per year to participate in day-care activities. The salary compensation given corresponds to that for periods of illness (37).

There is a growing interest among parents, professionals, and local and central administration in bringing the parents into closer cooperation with day care. The development of new types of institutions such as the parents' cooperatives and the "open pre-schools" are the perhaps most striking examples of this trend.

The government proposal "Day Care for All Children" also contains guidelines for increasing the influence of parents in the planning and development of day care within a framework decided upon by the local authority.

3A.6. Range of activities

In the day-care centre caring and education are combined, often in a structured schedule in which the routine activities are repeated from day to day, the being-together period, meals, rest, play. The activities have an educational foundation, and are planned for a group of children with due weight given to the intellectual, social, and emotional development of the individual child. In the early years aspects of care and nursing are prominent in day care while the educational aspects come more to the fore as school-age approaches.

The day care centres maintain contact with the "barnavårds-central"(child medical centres). Here the children receive health care and their development is followed up. Children in need of special attention will be given additional support, e.g. physiotherapy or language training. Psychological councelling is available when needed.

Children staying full time in the centres have one hot meal and two cold ones during the day.

3A.7. Educational concerns etc.

Educational consultants are employed in many municipalities to work with the day-care services, for example in catering for children with special needs. They are also charged with providing in-service training for the staff.

3A.8. Access. See 4.1 for a general discussion of access.

3A.9. Advantages and disadvantages.

High-quality day-care centres offer a secure and stimulating environment for children, and help parents who have to combine responsibility for children with paid employment or studies. This is the most popular of all the forms of day care. In surveys charting demand, day-care centres are what most parents opt for.

Because of the opening hours "ordinary" day-care centres cannot meet the requirements of parents who work at inconvenient hours (29,30,34).

The establishment of new types of centres is encouraged, and efforts are made to develop and improve the services offered in the "traditional" centres.

3A.10. Economy. See 1.4. - 1.5.

3A.11. See 1.6. - 1.7. on the government´s proposal "Day Care for All Children", see also 5.2.

3B. Part-time Day Care

3B.1. Provision and management

Part-time day-care ("deltidsgrupp") is mainly organized by the local authorities. In some districts it is also provided by the Swedish Church or by voluntary organizations.

3B.2. Age of children, hours of attendance

Part-time day care is intended for 4 to 6-year-olds. According to the Social Services Act local authorities have a mandate to accommodate 6-year-olds in day-care centres 3 hours per day or in part-time day care. In sparsely populated areas even 5-year olds are included (11). Part-time day care is provided in all the municipalities. The majority of children attending are 6 year olds, see Table 2. Usually part-time day-care is offered for 3 hours a day, 5 days a week.

3B.3. Staff

In 1984 7,700 persons were employed in part-time day care, of whom 4,300 (or 56%) were pre-school teachers and 2,900 (38%) nursery nurses. Four per cent or 340 had no training for working with children. The majority of the staff were women, only 92 men were registered as working in part-time day care (20).

3.4. Size of unit.

The part-time groups usually consist of approximately 20 children. It is recommended that there should be 2 adults, one of whom should be a qualified pre-school teacher, for every 40 children (2 groups each attending 3 hours per day. The registered staff/child ratio is 8 children per adult.

3B.5. Parental involvement. See section 3A.5.

3B.6. Range of activities

Part-time day care (often termed "play school") provides structured, educationally based, play and group activities.

3B.7. Educational concerns. See section 3A.7.

3.8. Access

Part-time day care is primarily intended for children aged 5-6, who are cared for at home or in family day care either public or private.

3B.9. Advantages and disadvantages. No special information

3.10. Costs per place

Part-time day-care is subsidized by government grants as shown in Table 1. (1.4). The remaining costs are defrayed by the local authorities. No parental fees are charged.

3B.11. Innovation

According to the government´s proposal, Day Care for All Children, part-time day care will represent an important part of the future day-care services too. According to this plan children who are cared for at home or in family day care are to be offered places in part-time groups.

"Open pre-school" ("Oppen förskola")

Open pre-school represents an interesting innovation in the part-time services offered to children and their parents or minders (see 2.5). Open pre-school is locally organized and receives government subsidies (see 1.4.). It is usually headed by a qualified pre-school teacher. Open pre-school offers an opportunity for contact between children and adults living in the same area, it is a meeting point for parents and family day-care providers, a place where information is exchanged, where children can play, and where educational guidance is offered. Open pre-school is registered as part of the day-care services. It differs from the other forms of day care, however, since no child may participate unless accompanied by an adult. Attendance is not registered. Participation is free of charge.

As noted above, the open pre-school has rapidly become very popular and this type of service is being established in the majority of Swedish municipalities. It is included in future plans for child-care services. According to the proposal "Day Care for All Children" children under 4 who are not admitted to full-time day care will be offered open pre-school, (see 1.6 - 1.7). Open pre-school activities are rapidly spreading. For the time being no data exists on the users of these services.

3 C. Subsidized Family Day Care

3C.1. Provision and management

Family day care is provided by the local authorities as part of the public day-care services. By the end of 1984 it was available in all municipalities. About 30.000 family day-care providers were involved, the majority of whom were women.

Family day care may be organized in the home of the child-minder, or in the "three-family system", where children from three or more families are cared for by a family day-care provider in the home of one of the children.

3C.2. Age of children, hours of attendance

Family day care is used for children aged 0-12 years.
For children aged 0-6 it may be full time or part time.

3C.3. Staff

The provider of family day care or child-minder is employed by the local authority, and has usually undergone a training course of 90-100 hours. The homes are approved by the local authority which also advises and supervises the child-minders. In 1984, subsidized family day care was provided in 31,300 homes, of which 5000 (16%) accommodated only pre-school children aged 0-6, 25,400 (81.5%) accommodated both pre-school children and school-children, 725 (2,3%) of the homes were attended only by school-children aged 7-12 years (11).

3C.4. Size of unit.

The majority of homes providing family day care, 72%, have groups of 5 children or more. In 21% of the homes, there are 8 children or more. Twentyseven percent have 1-4 children. As most of the homes accommodate children aged 0-12 years, not all of the children are usually present all day, and not necessarily at the same times. Whether the very young children are in smaller or larger groups is not reported.

There is no formal regulation of the adult/child ratio in

Swedish family day care. According to recommendations by the National Board of Health and Welfare, however, a family day-care provider ought not to care for more than 4 children including their own. As shown above, 72% of the homes providing family day care have more than the recommended number of children.

3C.5. Parental involvement. See 3A.5.

3C.6. Range of activities

For children aged 5-6 years old family day care may be supplemented by part-time groups. In several municipalities the open pre-school is open to all child-minders and the children they care for.

3C.7. Educational concerns. See 3A.7.

3C.8 Access

For the very young children, those aged 0-1, subsidized family day care is used slightly more often than day care in a centre. In the older age groups day- care centres are more frequent, but family day care represents a considerable proportion of day-care services offered to children aged 1-6 (1985).

Gegraphically family day care is more often found in sparsely populated areas than in the cities.

Family day care is more flexible as regards opening hours than day-care centres. It may therefore be more often used by parents working at night or at inconvenient hours.

3C.9. Advantages and disadvantages

In the 1982/83 survey of demand for day care a need for family day care was registered for 19% of all the children. Whether this indicated a real preference or merely reflected the current local situation is not clear. Many parents probably ask for family day care because it resembles an ordinary home, is perhaps also closer to home, offers more flexible hours than the day-care centres, and sometimes because it is the only day-care service available locally.

The relatively large groups of children commonly found in the family day-care system, raise the question of whether the number of adults is always sufficient to provide individual care and attention.

The net costs (on average) to the local authorities are higher for full-time family day care than for full-time care at a centre (see Table 1). Family day care may still be economically preferable, however, because it involves no capital outlays for the authorities.

Family day care offers job opportunities for considerable numbers of women, and may for various reasons be preferred to other jobs if such are available in the local labour market. It is a typical low-paid job, which may explain some of the problems of turnover and recruitment.

Efforts have been made to improve the working situation of the family day-care provider. The development of facilities like the "open pre-school" is specially aimed at children and their minders and may prevent the isolation and lack of stimulation often inherent in working at home.

3C.10. Costs

Family day care is subsidized by the government. The remaining costs are defrayed by the local authorities and the parents.

3C.11. Innovation. See 1.6 - 1.7

4. Access to Day Care.

4.1. Which parents/children have access

Children whose parents are in employment or studying are given priority in full-time day care. According to the Social Services Act, Section 6 and 15, children, with special needs must also be given priority. The local authorities may decide on the criteria for priority, e.g. by giving priority to siblings of children who already have places.

Part-time groups have been established in all municipalities. They are available for older pre-school children, the 5 to 6 year-olds, and are intended specially for children cared for at home, or in family day care.

As shown in Table 2, there are also considerable differences between younger and older pre-school children as regards both access to day care as a whole and to the various forms. Places are availbale for almost 100% of 6-year-olds, but only for 30% of the 0 to 2-year-olds.

Family day care is used for all age groups, but represents a larger share of available places for the under 3´s than for those aged 3-6. Pre-school on a part-time basis is offered to all 6-year-olds and to some younger children.

The recent discussions in Sweden about the "inequalities in day care", however, mainly refer to the distribution of available places between children of different socio-economic background (29,31,33,34). Swedish studies report that day-care facilities are used more frequently by children from white collar families than by working class children. This is partly due to differences in supply of day care in different districts, white collar families being more often resident in districts with better services. The differences in consumption of public day care may also stem from socio-cultural differences in attitude to this form of care. In one study mothers with relatively few years of schooling stated a preference for minding their own children more often than did other groups of mothers (32).

However the nature of the available day care may also be such that it meets the demand of some families better than others. Parents working at night or at inconvenient hours obviously need services supplementing ordinary day-care centres with "normal" opening hours.

The system used for allocating places may also contribute to a socially skewed distribution, since parents in full-time work or studying are given priority in cases where demand exceeds supply.

4.2. Assessment of needs

The Social Services Act instructs local authorities to make plans assessing the local need for day care and outlining their plans for satisfying it. From 1986 on the Central Bureau of Statistics is instructed to make annual national surveys of the forms of day care actually in use, and of people's wishes in this regard, (see 22).

In the governments proposal "Day Care for All Children" day care is presented as one of the public services that is to be provided universally, regardless of the situation of the parents. (When this goal is achieved, assessment of needs may well continue as a discussion about which forms of day care are to be preferred for which children).

The Swedish Association of Municipalities has estimated that universal day-care coverage for children aged 0-6 in 1990 would involve an increase from the present 280,000 to 500,000 places. This is based on the assumption that the labour market participation of mothers will increase from the present 80% participation rate to 90% (quoted in 31).

4.3. Information

Parents may obtain information from the local social administration and from the mother and child services or from the local day-care centres and open pre-schools. Popular consumer magazines often publish information about different aspects of day care, and political discussions about day care in recent years have probably increased the public's general awareness of the day-care situation and of what day care represents.

4.4. Geographical distribution

The distribution of day-care facilities shows considerable regional differences at county and municipal level, both as regards the number of places and the forms of care available. Generally the large urban centres have more places per 100 children than the rural areas. The county of Stockholm, has a day care coverage of close to 60%, while the county with the lowest coverage has places for 30% of pre-school children. Even more striking is the difference in coverage between municipalities, which ranges from 15% to 67%.

Day-care centres are most typically found in cities, while family day care and open pre-school are more common in rural, sparsely populated areas.

Day-care centres are more strongly represented in the urban areas than elsewhere. However, these are the areas where the labour market participation of parents is the highest, and the demand for day-care services is still not satisfied.

In sparsely populated areas part-time groups may be offered to both 5- and 6-year-olds. The government is considering a proposition to make open pre-school available for everybody.

In order to meet the needs of children from non-Swedish speaking families municipal day-care centres may have unilingual or bilingual groups, run by staff trained in the children's language.

Most children with handicaps are integrated into the ordinary groups in the day-care centres. In such cases the group size is often smaller, and the staff have special training. In some cases there are special divisions for handicapped children in a day-care centre.

4.5. Co-ordination

The local authority is charged with the planning and provision of day care in order to meet local demand.

4.6. Equitable access

It is generally acknowledged that an expansion of services is necessary in order to ensure more equitable access. The government's proposal aims at making public day-care services available for all children aged 18 months to 6 years by 1991. How the needs of families with children under 18 months are to be met, has not yet been resolved.

5. General Issues

5.1. Advantages and Disadvantages. See 3.9.

There is a general concern not only with the provision of sufficient day-care services to meet demands, but also with the differentiation of day care to suit different groups of children.

5.2. Pilot projects and experiments

As pointed out above (1.6-1.7 and 4.4), Swedish day care is undergoing a process of restructuring and reform. The planned expansion of services calls for very considerable investments and also for the development of new forms of and approaches to day care and its provision.

In the early 1980s the National Board of Health and Welfare initiated a wide-ranging program aimed at developing the educational contents of the public day-care system. A series of documents were published supplementing the program, on day care activities, pre-school education in a comparative perspective, on children's linguistic competence, on how to integrate playing, learning and working in day-care activities. The reform of the educational contents also necessitated a reform of the work organization in day-care centres and a reappraisal of the staff's role. A series of publications has been presented on Arbete i förskola (Working in day care), (see e.g. (9).

In addition to the central reforms there have been a large number of local projects developing the form and content of day care (see 1.6-1.7), which cover a wide range.

Parental involvment has not been a strong feature of traditional day-care centres. The centres run by parents' cooperatives have provided interesting alternatives to existing organizational models.

Experiments with new forms of day care have promoted the idea of the day-care centre as a resource for the whole neighbourhood, to be actively used not only by pre-school children, but by the local population.

"Open pre-school" is another interesting development providing as it does a place for parents and children who are not using the more traditional forms of day care, and also a place where the local child-minders can meet other adults, and where the children can find new play-mates. The further development of this type of service deserves attention.

In 1983 a debate was started about private, profit-making day-care centres, when a private corporation (AB Pysslingen Förskolor) wanted to promote private initiative in day care. So far, government subsidies have not been granted to profit-making day-care facilities.

Since 1984 SOK 25 - 30 million per year has been granted to local development and innovation in day care (see 1.6-1.7). An overview and evaluation of the various projects undertaken has recently been carried out and new proposals have been made (13).

Neighbourhood day care

Interesting innovations in day care and in the social services in general have also developed from untraditional conceptions of the role of the social services in everyday life. Day care as a neighbourhood resource has been a central idea in Linköping, a city of approximately 200,000 inhabitants in south-east Sweden. The emphasis is on decentralization of services, integration of different types of services, and cooperation between professionals and the neighbourhood residents. The provision of day care, which is a basic element in this model, is organized in two different types of localities, the "hemvist" or "home base" of a group of children, and the "leklada" or "play barn". The "home base" or day-care centre in this model is planned to cater for around 20 children, and is situated in an ordinary apartment or in a small house, where a homelike atmosphere is accentuated. This "home" can also be used by the neighbourhood residents in the evenings and week-ends. The play barn ("leklada") is used as a supplement by 3-4 home bases as it offers opportunities for activities that require more space. It is also used by local child-minders and parents and children. In the evenings the house may be used by local groups (31,35).

An intrinsic part of this model is the idea of developing day-care services in close cooperation with the parents and as a resource for local residents, not only for children. Day care is conceived of as being the concern of everyone in the neighbourhood. It is hoped that opening up institutions will help to combat tendencies towards "institutionalization" and "professionalization" in day care. This experiment has attracted much attention, and may represent one of the future models for Swedish day-care centres.

Parent participation

In a public day-care centre in an apartment in a Stockholm suburb active parent participation has been tried over a 3-year period. Each of the parents of the 24 children cared for work in the centre for 9-10 days per year. Parent participation is organized by the parents and amounts to 40 hours per week. The parents meet together once a month and they meet the staff regularly for information, planning, and decision-making (31).

Obviously such active involvement on the part of the parents is demanding for both parents and staff. However, communication between parents and between parents and staff seems to be greatly improved (compared with tradiotional day-care centres) and parents and children participate more in one anothers every day life. The scheme seems to further continuity in the child's daily life, and probably improves understanding of each other's situation between parents and staff.

Day-care centres run by parents' cooperatives

During the last years approximately 150 parents' cooperatives have started day-care centres. Originating as they did in a situation where day care was, and is, much in demand, they seem to have become increasingly popular, perhaps partly because parents have more influence in this form of centre than in traditional ones. The organization of the cooperative centres varies considerably. Usually the parents have to accept a certain amount of voluntary work connected with the daily running of the centre, and they are mainly responsible for the planning and organization.

These day-care centres are financed by government grants and parental payment. Several, but not all of the local authorities support the cooperatives. According to the oldest of the cooperative day-care centres in Nacka, in operation since 1975, the municipal costs per place can be reduced by 2/3 in the cooperatives as compared with the municipal day- care centres, without increasing the costs to the parents or the state. For 1982 the following figures were given for parent cooperative and municipal day care centres:.

Costs per place, SOK

Day care centre	State	Municipality	Parents
Municipal	22.500	21.100	4.550
Parent-cooperative	22.500	7.000	3.100*

* Parents' working hours not included, estimated to be worth SOK 2.500 after adjustment for tax).
Source: (31, p.66)

The possibilities of parental involvement seem to be considerably better within this type of organization than in the more traditional forms of care, and parent - child - staff communication seems better. Although the parents lose income from their ordinary work from doing unpaid work at the centre, this is presumably compensated by the comparatively lower fees, and by the decrease in marginal taxation.

5.3. Cost/benefit analyses

The costs of providing different forms of day care have been compared on a Nordic basis, in a study that did not however, try to compare the quality of the care provided (24).

5.4. Comparative studies

At the Swedish Teacher Training College in Stockholm a longitudinal project is being carried out, comparing the development of children cared for by their parents at home and children in full-time day-care centre (26, 33).

In Gothenburg comparative studies have been made of day care in centres and family day care (28).

Summary:

Public day-care services in Sweden are generally considered to be of high quality. Day care for pre-school children is part of a comprehensive child-care program directed at children aged 0 - 12 and their families. The provision of day care is integrated with the general welfare policies, and is regarded as a means of furthering equal opportunities for all children.

In 1986 a rough estimate indicated that 50-60% of the children aged 0 - 6 attended day-care centres full-time or part-time, subsidized family day care, or "open pre-school". It is the aim of the present government to make such day care facilities available to all children aged 18 months to 6 years by 1991. Even though the number of places has been expanded rapidly over the last few years, considerable investments in day care are still necessary if this aim is to be fulfilled. To support further expansion, an extraordinary government grant was given for one year, in 1986, for the establishment of new day-care facilities. Legislation may be introduced to make a certain level of day-care provision mandatory for local authorities.

As in Denmark and Norway, the local authorities in Sweden are responsible for the provision of day care. The form of day care, the number of places, and the standard of services are decided on locally. Subsidized day-care services are almost entirely provided by the local authority, in contrast to the situation in Denmark and Norway, where the mixture of private and public involvement is striking.

Central government subsidies are granted for the running of municipal day care. On average central and local authorities each cover 45% of the running costs, while the parents' fees represent 10%. Private day-care services are subsidized too, on equal terms, provided that these are included in the local day-care plan, operated on a permanent basis, and non-profit-making. Recently day- care services run by parents' cooperatives have become popular partly because of the shortage of public facilities.

In recent years there has been a remarkable increase in the number of children attending all forms of subsidized day care, because of an increase in the number of facilities and also because more children have been admitted to existing institutions. Even so, the supply of day care in many municipalities is not sufficient to meet the demand. Since more than 80% of the mothers and as many of the fathers of pre-school children are in employment or studying, the demand for extra-familial day care is high.

The decentralized approach to day-care provision encourages local involvement and flexibility in supplying local requirements for different forms of day care. Decentralization does not, however, secure equality of access in all regions, as shown by the differences between one county or municipality and another as regards the proportion of pre-school children attending public day care.

Local development, innovation, and research concerning day-care structure and content is supported economically by the National Board of Health and Welfare, and interesting experiments are being made in which new models for day care organization are tried out.

Swedish day-care policies for the 1980s have two goals: to expand the services and to improve the quality and content of day care. Day care is undergoing a process of restructuring and development to meet the demands of a changing society and changing family patterns.

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Tables 3-6

Table 3. Number of children in different forms of public day care by year of birth, 31. December 1984.

Year of birth	Day-care centre	Family day care	Part-time day care
1984	1.546	1.924	
1983	19.103	15.971	
1982	26.454	18.931	
1981	30.555	18.516	166
1980	34.000	18.433	1.542
1979	33.449	17.429	12.742
1978	28.139	17.604	63.426
Total no. of children aged 0-6	173.246	108.808	77.876

Source: (20), Table 3, p. 12.

Table 4. Children in full-time day-care centres and family day care by age in 1974, 1980 and 1984, expressed per centage of all children in age group.

	Age of children	
Year	0-2	3-6
1974	10	14
1980	22	38
1984	30	52

Source: as above, Table 2, page 11.

Table 5. Children in day-care centres by age, expressed as percentage of all children in age group.

Age of child years	Day-Care Centre Full time	Part time	Total
6	30.0	68.5	98.5
5	34.0	13.0	47.0
4	36.0	1.8	37.8
3	33.0		33.0
0-2	17.0		17.0

Source: (14)

Table 6. Forms of child care for children 0-6 years in 1986. Absolute numbers and percentages

Form of care	Number of children	%
One parent at home	251.000	36
Parent at home is also child-minder for others		3
Full-time centre	183.000	29
Subsidized family day care	114.000	18
Paid, private child-minder	50.000	8
Unpaid private child-minder	19.000	3
Part-time centre	24.000	4
Total	643.000	101

Source: (22) p.2.

Appendix

1. Policy and Objectives

1.1 For what purposes is day care provided and what policy or policies does the present government administration follow in the provision of day care ?

1.2 Which agencies provide and manage day care : government, local or educational authorities, voluntary organisations, employers, parents or private persons ?

1.3 What regulation is there by either central or local government ?
What advice or guidelines are laid down by government ?
What are the arrangements for central or local inspection or other quality control ?
Are there types of day care which are not regulated ?
Are any changes in regulation planned or envisaged ?

1.4 What is the policy on funding day care ?
Are there, for example, any arrangements for tax relief for those who employ parents, for parents or providers and managers of day care ?
Are there other forms of help or subsidy ? If so, which ones ?

1.5 What is the policy on parental payments and in relation to which facilities ?

1.6 What are the major national issues surrounding the provision of day care for children ?

1.7 Are there any proposals and/or programmes for the development of policy and provision, specific or more general, in the shorter and/or longer term ? If so, please specify.

2. Day care for pre-school children

2.1 How many children are there under school age
2.11 under three years ?
2.12 between three years and statutory school age ?

2.2 What proportion of mothers of children under three years
2.21 work full-time ?
2.22 work part-time ?

2.3 What proportion of mothers of children between three years and statutory school age
2.31 work full-time ?
2.32 work part-time ?

2.4 How many single parent families are there
2.41 of children under three years ?
2.42 of children between three years and school age ?

2.5 What forms of day care, public and/or private, are provided
2.51 for children under three years ?
2.52 for children between three years and statutory school age (nursery schools and other facilities) ?

2.6 What number of children is there in each of the forms of day care listed above ?

2.7 Is there any estimate of the number of children who may be in unregulated or uncontroled forms of day care (eg. grand-parents, relatives, unregistered day-minders ...) ?

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3. Description of the various existing forms of day care

NB For each existing form of day care (public and/or private) please answer, if possible, the following questions, if applicable.

3.1 How is the form provided, managed and organised ?

3.2 How old are the children ?
How long do they stay daily in day care ?
Is it full-time, part-time or occasional ?

3.3 What persons have the charge of the children ? Who does what ? In centre care, who is responsible ?
Are all the persons qualified ?
What are the type and level of their qualifications ? Is there in-service training ?
Are these persons able to care for children of different religious, ethnic or cultural groups ? Do the arrangements include volunteers ?

3.4 What is the size of the unit, the size of groups of children ?
What is the staff/child ratio in relation to the length of the day and the hours that the children spend in day care ?

3.5 What part do parents play in the care of the children or in the management of the day care ? Are the parents treated as partners in the care of their children ? If the parents are working, have special arrangements been made to involve them in the care of their children ?

3.6 What is the range of activities for the children ? Are other services, such as education or health, an integral part of or associated with day care ?

3.7 Are there any educational concerns, pedagogical projects, psychological support ?

3.8 Which parents and children have access to the form of day care described ?

3.9 What particular merits or disadvantages have been found to be associated with the form of day care concerned ?

3.10 How is each form financed ? - and what is the cost per place ?

3.11 Are there any recent or proposed innovations in this form of day care ?

4. Access to day care / availability / distribution

4.1 Which parents/children have access to the various forms of day care ?
Are there social groups (eg ethnic groups, single parents, parents in employment) which are given priority ?
Are there socio-professional groups which are over-represented or under-represented ?

4.2 What measures have been taken to make an assessment of national and/or local needs for day care ?

4.3 In what ways can parents obtain relevant information about the forms and availability of child care ?
Are there any efforts being made and/or actions taken to provide information for parents ?

4.4 What is the geographical distribution of the different kinds of day care ? Are there any notable differences, according to regions, urban and rural areas ?
Have particular forms of child care developed in response to rural or urban needs or in response to ethnic, cultural and religious needs. or other needs ? If so. please specify ?

4.5 What measures have been taken to promote co-ordination between forms of day care so as to improve access/availability, to prevent duplication and to make the best use of resources ?

4.6 What measures have been taken to ensure equitable access to day care ?

5. General issues

5.1 What merits or disadvantages to children and families have become apparent in the different forms of child care ?

5.2 Are there any experiments, new developments, pilot projects or research relating to day care of children ?

5.3 Have any studies of cost/benefit been undertaken in relation to the forms of day care ?

5.4 Have any comparative studies been carried out concerning the different forms of day care for children ? If so, please give details.

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Sammendrag

Emneord

Summary

This report presents an overview of the day-care services developed for pre-school children in Denmark, Norway and Sweden. The focus is on day-care structure:
- provision, management, finances
- supply and demand
- distribution and accessability of day care

In Part I the "Scandinavian approach" to day care is outlined, based on a comparison of the day-care systems of the 3 countries. Individual, national reports rendered as Part II - IV were originally prepared in connection with the Council of Europe 1986/87 Social Research Fellowships Programme, "Forms of Child Care".

Index terms

day-care provision, forms of day care, distribution of day care

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